Bengaluru Sunday, September 7, 2025 Pages 20 Vol 78 No 248 ₹8

DH on Sunday

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DECCAN HERALD
The Power of Good

Trump, Modi exchange positive vibes

Officials trying to arrange meeting with leaders in Malaysia

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Travel *Page16*

Adventures on the edge of the Indian Ocean

Australia's South-West is a land of lush forests, ancient cliffs, rolling dunes, and pristine beaches

Art & Pursuits *Page18*

Walls that speak

An initiative seeks to give a voice to the Deevaru women artists whose dedication has kept the Chittara art form alive

Books *Page15*

Unsung patriot

This book is not just a biography of a brave soldier; it is proof that patriotism transcends religion

Food & Drink *Page17*

Edible omens

Across cultures, food and drink have long been used as tools for divination, where every bite or sip reveals a hidden secret

Quickly

Sinner faces Alcaraz in US Open final

Jannik Sinner took a medical timeout because of a bothersome abdominal muscle during a mid-match lull before retaking control for a 6-1, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 victory over Felix Auger-Aliassime in the US Open semifinals on Friday night, moving closer to a second consecutive title at Flushing Meadows.

Details on Page 12

'Canada link to Khalistani aid'

At least two Khalistani extremist groups have received financial support originating from Canada, according to a Canada government report. The report, '2025 Assessment of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Risks in Canada', has identified the extremist groups as Babbar Khalsa International and International Sikh Youth Federation.

Details on Page 3

Wild Karnataka: A new frontier for business

Conservation, once seen as service, is a fractured landscape shaped by profit and power

CHIRANJEEVI KULKARNI

Alas, with the globalisation of the consumer society, restraint is no longer an idea much welcomed in other parts of the world either," says Ramachandra Guha in his latest book, *Speaking With Nature: The Origin of Indian Environmentalism.*

Guha, a historian, laments that unrestrained consumption, once seen as an American or European problem, has now become an 'aspirational' lifestyle across societies. In this backdrop, he pays tribute

The **SUNDAY STORY**

to 10 persons who contributed to Indian Environmentalism as 'socio-ecologists', serving both people and nature.

A king cobra photographed in the Western Ghats in Karnataka.

The historian's concerns about unrestrained consumption appear to have come alive closer home, in Karnataka's forests. Over the past two weeks, a series of scandals around king cobra (*Ophiophagus hannah*) conservation has brought to the fore once again a troubling contradiction: The very conservationists who built their careers advocating restraint from human interference and reduced carbon footprint on natural habitats seem to have forsaken it.

Decades of work at the Agumbe Rainforest Research Station (ARRS) in Shivamogga district has been quickly overshadowed by a conflict of interest over the purchase of land inside the Someshwara Wildlife Sanctuary by ARRS field director Ajay Giri's wife. But blaming Giri alone is unfair as many conservationists, even those who built their career by forcing out tribals from forests to create protected areas (PAs), have bought land inside or on the edge of PAs.

At the Kalinga Centre for Rainforest Ecology (KCRE), located in the middle of the Eco Sensitive Zone (ESZ) of Someshwara Wildlife Sanctuary in the Kudremukh Wildlife Division, business is booming. The centre offers 'stay' and 'experience' to people at anywhere between Rs 6,050 per night and Rs 7,865 per night. Then there are workshops for researchers charged at Rs 7,500 to Rs 10,000 and a summer camp for teenagers charged at Rs 31,000 per head.

To a question, Sivaram Babu M, the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Kudremukh Wildlife Division, said he will look into the issues raised by *DH*. "KCRE has been set up in the ESZ limits. We will see whether they have received clearance to run commercial and research activities," he said.

▸ Business of conservation, Page 2

Balancing the basket

Refining farm trade policy holds the key to India's long-term export goals

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Agriculture has become the defining fault line in the protracted trade negotiations between India and the United States. The USA, under President Donald Trump, continues to press for expanded access for American farm exports, framing it as essential to balancing trade ties.

India, however, has

INSIGHT

drawn a clear boundary, arguing that the livelihoods of millions of small farmers and the stability of its rural economy cannot be placed on the bargaining table.

"The livelihood interests of our farmers and requirements of food security have always been paramount for the government while negotiating trade agreements with our international partners, including the US," Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Ramnath Thakur said, in reply to a question in the Lok Sabha recently.

Through the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, signed with the UK in July, the Narendra Modi government claims to have secured significant market access for the Indian farm sector in the British market.

However, perishables like dairy products, edible oils, apples and oats have remained out of the deal.

India has signed more than a dozen free trade agreements with major partners, including the UAE, Japan, Australia, Singapore and South Korea. In each case, however, New Delhi has held firm on agriculture, refusing to offer concessions.

These are efforts to shield a sector that sustains a majority of the population and underpins food security despite seeing a fall in GDP share. According to data from the Central Statistics Department, the share of agriculture in India's GDP has fallen from 47.6% in 1961 to below 15% today.

▸ Agri trade, Page 2

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TOP EXPORT DESTINATIONS (IN $ MILLION)

2,056.82	2,041.97	1,960.86	1,478.23	1,294.09	1,238.11	1,045.53	1033.18	884.61	859.02
UAE	SAUDI ARABIA	US	IRAQ	VIETNAM	MALAYSIA	BENIN	BANGLADESH	IRAN	INDONESIA

Sudden export bans impact farmers

Agri trade, from Page 1

The decline has been most pronounced since the economic liberalisation in 1991, when the share of agriculture and allied sectors halved. It dropped from 29.5% in 1991 to 22.3% in 2001, and further to 14.4% in 2011. Over the past decade and a half, the sector has hovered around the 15% mark.

Still, agriculture remains a mainstay of the economy, employing nearly half (55%) of the country's workforce. Given its deep link to rural livelihoods, the sector continues to wield significant influence over India's politics.

This centrality of agriculture has been evident in the policies of successive prime ministers, from Nehru to Modi. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, famously remarked, "Everything can wait but agriculture."

This political sensitivity has also been reflected in India's stand in the bilateral trade agreement negotiations with the US. "For us, the welfare of our farmers is of the highest priority. Bharat will never compromise on the interests of its farmers, livestock rearers, and fishermen. And I am fully aware that I may have to pay a very heavy price personally, but I am prepared for it," Modi said last month after US President Trump announced the imposition of a 50% tariff on Indian goods.

Agriculture has long been a key driver of India's exports. Between 2013-14 and 2023-24, overall merchandise exports grew from $314 billion to $437.10 billion, marking a 39% increase over the decade.

In the same period, agricultural exports rose at a much faster pace, jumping by 112% from $22.70 billion to $48.15 billion. This surge was partly driven by a surge in food prices in the international market. In the financial year ending March 2025, agricultural exports grew 6.4% year-on-year to reach $51.9 billion, even as overall merchandise exports stayed almost flat at $437.4 billion.

Agriculture accounts for over 11% of India's overall merchandise exports. Basmati and non-Basmati rice, spices, sugar, buffalo meat, oil, fruit, vegetables and marine products constitute major products of export. Globally, India is among the top 10 exporters of agricultural products.

India is also a significant importer of agricultural products. According to the World Trade Organisation's Trade Statistical Review (2022), the country's share in global agricultural exports was 2.4%, while its share in imports stood at 1.7% in 2021.

"Agriculture is steadily emerging as a key engine of India's export growth. However, sustaining this momentum amid shifting geopolitical dynamics will require greater focus on high-value markets, consistent policies, and targeted infrastructure investments to fully unlock India's potential in the global agri-trade market," said Avinash Chandani, Partner at Deloitte India.

Sowing caution: Fault lines in India's agri trade

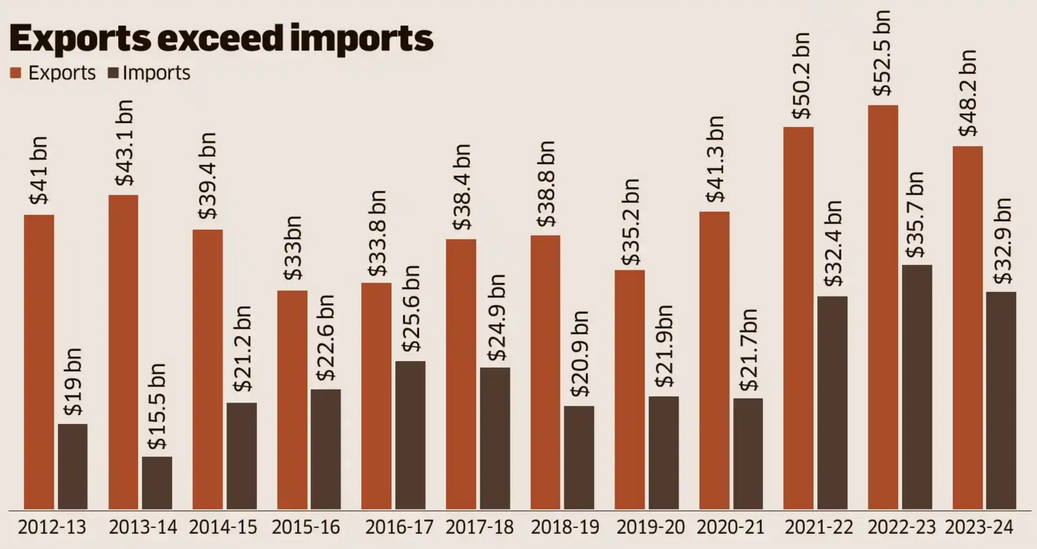
Farm exports
In 2024-25, India exported agricultural products worth $51.9 billion

Key drivers
Rice is the largest exported product from India and edible oil the largest imported product

Trade surplus
India's net export of agricultural commodities has consistently exceeded its imports in the last decade

Exponent growth
Country's export of agri commodities rose by 112% from $22.7 bn to $48.15 bn in the last decade

Exports exceed imports



TRADE-RELATED ISSUES

- Sporadic bans on exports, when domestic production is low and/or prices are likely to rise, have made India an unreliable supplier. The export ban leads to global shortages and/or price increases
- Several exports get rejected in key markets for not adhering to food safety standards. As per the Global Trade Research Initiative 2024, around 105 India's spice exports are at risk, with nearly $700 million threatened by regulatory actions in various countries
- Multiple agencies with overlapping regulations increase compliance costs, and poor accountability
- Lack of a product specific export strategy and data makes it difficult to identify and map the products globally

Indo-US trade

US-India annual trade averages **$7 billion**

India imports **$1.5 billion** in US agri products, dominated by almonds and pistachios

In contrast, India's agricultural exports stand at **$5.5 billion**

Marine products form **46%** of the exports, followed by rice, vegetables and spices

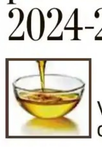
Import of edible oil

Palm oil accounted for 45.8% of India's total oil import between 2016 and 2023

Crude soybean formed 23%, and crude sunflower 15.9% of total imports

Recent global shocks
The US-China trade war and Covid-19 temporarily disrupted export routes, creating both challenges and opportunities for Indian exporters depending on the commodity and the destination market

Major export products in 2024-25


Marine products

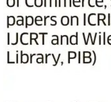
Basmati rice

Non-Basmati rice

Spices

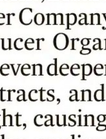
Buffalo meat

Coffee

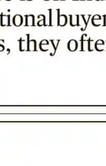

Oil meals

& Miscellaneous processed items

Major import products in 2024-25

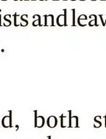

Vegetable oil

Cashew


Fresh fruits

Pulses

Spices


Raw cotton

(Source: APEDA, Niti Aayog, Department of Commerce, study papers on ICRIER, IJCRT and Wiley Online Library, PIB)

Seafood exporters on edge amid US-India tensions

Seafood is among the top commodities of India's exports. In the financial year ending in March 2025, India exported nearly 17 lakh tonnes of seafood worth $7.45 billion, as per the Commerce Ministry data.

Being heavily dependent on the US market, India's seafood exporters are staring at a massive disruption this year. The United States accounted for nearly 35% of India's total seafood shipments in 2024-25. Until early August, India's seafood exporters faced a 10% duty in the US.

Frozen shrimp is one of the biggest export items in quantity, as well as in terms of value, accounting for two-thirds of overall seafood exports. In 2024-25, the US imported shrimps worth $2.4 billion from India. High tariffs have made Indian shrimps uncompetitive in the US markets.

The government has asked the seafood exporters to explore alternative markets. The central government has identified Russia, the UK, the European Union, Norway, Switzerland, the Middle East and South Korea, among a new set of focal countries for the export of seafood, D V Swamy, Chairman, the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), said recently.

Compiled by: Divyashri Mudakavi

DH Graphic: Ramu Mastaiah

Inconsistent policy

India's agricultural export policy has often been shaped by concerns over domestic inflation, leading to sudden bans on commodities such as rice, wheat, sugar and onion. In 2023 and 2024, for instance, restrictions were imposed on the export of rice, wheat and onion in an effort to contain rising prices.

According to Deepak Ballani, Director General of the Indian Sugar & Bio-energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA), a consistent export policy would strengthen India's position in global markets.

"Consistent policy is important. If we know that we will get an export every year, we can plan for raw sugar. The demand for raw sugar is higher in the international market," Ballani said. Ballani said sugar production is estimated to jump to 350 lakh tonnes in the sugar year, starting from October 2025.

"Out of roughly 350 lakh tonnes, about 285 lakh tonnes are for domestic consumption. That leaves 65 lakh tonnes. On top of that, the closing stock this year is 52 lakh tonnes. If we are not allowed to export, prices will crash in the domestic market," he said.

Ballani advocates for the industry to be given the freedom to decide on the timing of exports. The government normally sets a mill-wise quota and decides on the time of export, depending on the domestic price and stocks.

"Eliminate sudden export bans and minimum export price shocks. Credibility is a market asset," said Amit Vatsyayan, leader, GPS-Agriculture, Livelihood, Social and Skills, EY India.

Vatsyayan also emphasised the need for tax and other policies to support exports. "Fix GST input credit on cold-chain assets, reefer trucks, testing, and export packaging; ensure refunds are cleared in days, not months. Remove the inverted duty on processing inputs and rationalise the mandi cess for export lots," he added.

Impact on farmers' income

Sudden bans and restrictions, in the form of quotas and the imposition of duties, also affect farmers' income. In December 2023, the government banned the export of onions in view of the jump in prices in domestic markets. The ban was lifted in May 2024, ahead of the Lok Sabha election, but restrictions continued in the form of minimum export price and export duty.

The export restrictions led to widespread protests in Maharashtra, India's largest onion-producing state. Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat are among the other major onion producers.

The restrictions triggered a sharp fall in onion prices in the domestic market, forcing farmers to offload their stocks. In protest, several farmers in Nashik and other parts of Maharashtra even dumped their produce in the fields, arguing that the prevailing market prices did not cover their cultivation costs.

"A few years ago, the Union Government restricted the import of yellow peas to India. However, since 2017, the policy has been changing, and now it is being imported duty-free," said Basavaraj Ingin, president, Karnataka Pradesh Red Gram Growers Association.

The lack of a long-term import and export policy at the central level has been hurting Indian farmers and traders. "Frequent changes in export-import policies create uncertainty across the agricultural sector. For farmers, sudden bans mean a surplus at home and a crash in prices," said Chetan Dabke, president, Bidar Horticulture Farmer Producer Company.

For Farmer-Producer Organisations (FPOs), the impact is even deeper. Months of aggregation, contracts, and logistics can collapse overnight, causing not only financial losses but also eroding the trust farmers and buyers place in FPOs. The broader consequence is on India's reputation: When international buyers witness cancelled shipments, they often turn to competitors, and regaining their confidence can take years, Dabke noted.

Erratic rainfall driven by climate change adds another layer of vulnerability. Staples like onions, tomatoes, and potatoes are particularly susceptible to extreme weather, even though India maintains self-sufficient production levels. Small and marginal farmers, who form the bulk of vegetable suppliers, bear disproportionate losses due to limited safeguards, storage, and transport infrastructure.

Export targets

The Indian government has set a vision to nearly double annual agricultural exports to $100 billion by 2030. Over the past 30 years, agricultural exports have grown elevenfold. However, this growth has been uneven. In 1994, exports stood at $4.4 billion and took a decade to double. Between 2004 and 2014, they surged nearly fivefold, only to take another ten years to double again.

India's agricultural exports are concentrated in five commodities — rice, marine products, spices, sugar, and buffalo meat — which together accounted for more than 80% of total agricultural exports in 2024-25. Within many markets, exports remain concentrated in specific products.

To achieve the $100 billion target, diversification of both the product basket and export destinations is essential. Emphasis must be placed on high-value, value-added, and processed food products. While doubling exports may seem feasible based on the rapid growth between 2004 and 2014, evolving geopolitical dynamics, particularly US tariffs, pose significant challenges.

(With inputs from Mrityunjay Bose in Mumbai, Pavan Kumar H in Hubballi and SNV Sudhir in Hyderabad)

Have your say
To express your opinion, e-mail us at: insight@deccanherald.co.in

Business of conservation, from Page 1

For profit or for nature? The conservation conundrum

KCRE is built by P Gowri Shankar, who came to the limelight with his research work on the king cobras. Responding to queries by *DH*, Shankar initially denied that the centre was located in the ESZ. When it was pointed out that the government notification puts the KCRE about 800 metres between the boundaries of the core area and ESZ, Shankar did not respond.

To queries about monetisation of conservation research, Shankar said KCRE was a Skill-India certified 'for-profit environmental education firm', but failed to provide details of any specific permission granted by the forest department. According to Shankar, 'stay' and 'experience' activities constitute 'agro tourism'. In reality, these are regulated activities which require the permission of the forest, tourism and other departments.

Ironically, these activities are organised in the name of Kalinga, or the king cobra, conservation, which is not a snake in conflict with humans as per guidelines issued by the Karnataka Forest Department.

Snakes that are in conflict in Karnataka and India are the 'Big Four' (Russel's viper, common krait, Indian cobra and saw-scaled viper), which account for most of the 58,000 deaths due to snake bites per year.

A closer look at the social media profiles of some conservationists reveals a world where core conservation has been commercialised and commodified to byte-sized video clips, consumed more for entertainment than for education.

Meanwhile, there is no information on whether guidelines (for instance, getting mandatory permission from the Chief Wildlife Warden) are followed while handling the king cobra.

As the king cobra habitat – the Western Ghats – comes under the bulldozers in the name of 'development' projects, the snake continues to be at the epicentre of conservation activities. Be it illegal road widening, mining work or legalised destruction proposed by many works like the Sharavathy Pumped Storage Project, most established conservationists and NGOs working in the sector, however, have maintained a stoic silence.

Responding to the developments over the past few weeks, Sagar-based conservationist Akhilesh Chipli said that organisations which are functioning with multiple violations should be held to account. "Forest officers are custodians of the forests and wildlife on behalf of the public. It is time they protect biodiversity from self-serving researchers and send a clear message that nobody is allowed to monetise wildlife and do business in the name of conservation," he said.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (EWPRT) B P Ravi said forest staff at the division level need to monitor the research work done by NGOs. "Permissions given by the department need to be monitored. The divisional officers should report in case any of the conditions are violated. The Research Advisory Committee checks compliance. Any violation allows the department to take up an inquiry and suspend the research," he said.

Senior conservationist Madhav Gadgil said he saw the emerging contradictions very early on, in the 1970s. "I have seen many bogus efforts for many decades," he said.

Back in 2001, Gadgil examined the structural aspects of the problem and pointed out 'pseudo-scientific' management of India's natural resources as a key source of several contradictions and conflicts of interest. "Now, a genuinely scientific enterprise would eliminate such contradictions rapidly through an open process of assessment of facts and working hypotheses. But the management of India's natural resources is a closed, highly centralised, bureaucratic enterprise which leaves no scope for corrective response," he wrote in *Ecological Journeys: The Science and Politics of Conservation in India.*

State Forest, Ecology and Environment Minister Eshwar B Khandre agreed that conservation should be democratic and built on trust, but added that the department has a duty to perform. "We definitely want people's participation in conservation. However, this should not lead to individuals and NGOs coming up with hidden agendas and self-serving goals. I will convene a meeting of senior officials to draft revised guidelines to prevent misuse of permissions given for wildlife research and projects within forest areas. Recent incidents have underlined the need to monitor conservation work and research undertaken by conservationists and NGOs," he said.

However, the government has not set a good example overall. In fact, a conservationist noted that, except for the lack of necessary permits, KCRE essentially followed the model of the Karnataka government's Jungle Lodges and Resorts, which attract far more tourists and leave greater ecological footprints.

Research

On the other hand, both state and central governments have stopped funding research. The crackdown on NGOs following the protests against the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project has gradually morphed into a panopticon-like system, where many organisations that adopt adversarial positions have been stripped of their licenses to access foreign funding.

Today, NGOs are dependent on grants from corporate companies, which insist that organisations be self-sustaining. Even organisations that genuinely work for conservation are in a situation where their integrity would eventually become contingent upon the conduct of their donor entities.

"When the government, a tax-levying entity, sets up agencies to collect corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds for conservation, it will result in conflicts of interest. A company which contributes funds will find it easy to get regulatory clearances," a conservationist said, adding that a course correction was needed.

For K S Seshadri, faculty at Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment, such a correction is possible when conservationists operate with service-mindedness. "One of the best examples of a conservationist turning into a guardian of biodiversity is G N Ashoka Vardhana. He purchased revenue land abutting the Western Ghats in 2006 and has left it untouched. He only allows researchers to stay in the container home and work without disturbing the ecosystem," he said.

"I have earned enough for my living and decided that's enough," Ashoka Vardhana said. He manifests the restraint that Guha holds as the foundation of conservation, while stressing the need for people-centric conservation on the lines of the Chipko movement.

Lack of restraint has already turned health, education and social services into sectors where 'enterprising' deep pockets can spin money, all at the cost of the vulnerable and the downtrodden. Wildlife is a relatively new frontier for corporate India, which seems to be eager to greenwash and build its brands.

Thaw in sight as Trump talks of 'spl ties' with India

Modi reciprocates; Officials trying to fix Modi-Trump meet in Malaysia

ANIRBAN BHAUMIK
NEW DELHI, DHNS

India and the US on Saturday signalled their intent to arrest the slide in bilateral relations over tariffs, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi quickly appreciating President Donald Trump's comment acknowledging the "very special relationship" between the two nations.

Officials in New Delhi and Washington have also started exploring the possibility of a bilateral meeting between Modi and Trump on the sidelines of the ASEAN summit in Malaysia next month, even as uncertainty continues over the proposed conclave of the leaders of the Quad – a four-nation bloc comprising India, Japan, Australia and the US – in New Delhi.

"I will always be friends with Modi," the US president told journalists in the White House early on Saturday, just a few hours after he posted on Truth Social that the US seemed to have lost India and Russia to "deepest, darkest China".

While Trump's social media post on Friday was apparently triggered by recent meetings of Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Tianjin, his comment in the White House on Saturday was in response to a question from a journalist on the possibility of a reset in the relations between India and the US. "He (Modi) is a great prime minister. He's great," Trump responded.

He, however, gave vent to his sulks. "I'll always be friends, but I just don't like what he (Modi) is doing at this particular moment," he said, adding: "But India and the United States have a very special relationship. There is nothing to worry about. We just have moments on occasion".

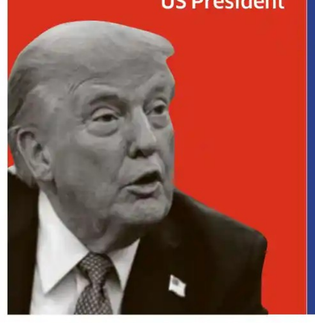
New Delhi moved quickly to iron out the wrinkles in the ties. "Deeply appreciate and fully reciprocate President Trump's sentiments and positive assessment of our ties," Modi posted on X, tagging Trump. "India and the US have a very positive and forward-looking Comprehensive and Global Strategic Partnership."

▸ Trump, Page 8

Twist and turns

- First exchange of views between the two after their phone conversation on June 17
- In last few days, several Trump administration officials have used offensive language to target India
- Trump earlier said US was losing India & Russia to China

"I'll always be friends, but I just don't like what he (Modi) is doing at this particular moment. But India and the United States have a very special relationship"
Donald Trump, US President



"Deeply appreciate and fully reciprocate President Trump's sentiments and positive assessment of our ties. India and the US have a very positive and forward-looking Comprehensive and Global Strategic Partnership"
Narendra Modi, PM

No external issues: Vaishnaw on GST

Stating that the new GST rates had nothing to do with any external issues, Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Saturday said that the reforms will give a boost to the Indian economy. He said that the tax reforms will kick in during Navratri, the advent of the Indian festive season.
Details on Page 9

Indian women live 4 yrs longer than men: Report

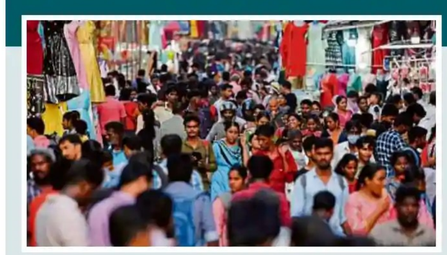
Life expectancy now stands at 70.3 years

DH SPECIAL

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

HIGHLIGHTS FROM SRS REPORT

Males live 68.5 years as against 72.5 years for females; Kerala has highest life expectancy (75.1 years); Karnataka (70 yrs)



- In 1947, life expectancy was around **32 years** and rose to **49.7 years** in 1970-75
- Among top 10 causes of death, cardiovascular disease contributes max 31% of deaths
- Gap between rural and urban life expectancy has also narrowed down significantly from 1970-75 to 2019-23

Indian women, on an average, live four years more than men, according to the latest official data that also shows life expectancy in India is now 70.3 years, a gain of more than 20 years compared to the situation 50 years ago.

Kerala has the highest life expectancy at 75.1 years and southern states fare better than their northern counterparts.

Among southern states, Karnataka's life expectancy at 70 years is the lowest compared to Andhra Pradesh (70.7), Telangana (70.8) and Tamil Nadu (73.4), says the new Sample Registration Survey report.

A second SRS report on the causes of death reveals that non-communicable diseases account for nearly 57% of deaths. Among the top 10 causes of death, cardiovascular disease contributes 31% of deaths, with respiratory infections (9.3%) and cancers (6.4%) coming a distant second and third places.

According to the SRS report, males live 68.5 years as against 72.5 years for females. Almost all the states and Union Territories have recorded a higher life expectancy at birth for females in the 2019-23 period, both across rural and urban areas.

"On an average, female life expectancy at birth is more than male life expectancy at birth by almost four years. Even at age 70 years, this difference is favourable towards females by more than one year," it says.

When India became independent in 1947, life expectancy was around 32 years. It rose gradually to 49.7 years in 1970-75 and finally crossed the 70-mark five decades later. In the 1970s, males had higher life expectancy, but the table has turned in favour of females.

A state wise break-up shows life expectancy for males is the best in Jammu and Kashmir (73.4 years) whereas for females, it is Kerala (78.4).

▸ Life expectancy, Page 8

'2 Khalistani groups getting funds from within Canada'

OTTAWA, PTI

At least two Khalistani extremist groups have received financial support originating from Canada, according to a new Canadian government report on terrorism financing.

The latest official report is titled '2025 Assessment of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Risks in Canada'.

It has identified the Khalistani extremist groups receiving financial support originating from Canada as Babbar Khalsa International and the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF).

That report appeared to have vindicated New Delhi's consistent position that pro-Khalistani elements in Canada have been carrying out anti-India activities with impunity.

The development comes two months after a report by Ottawa's intelligence agency said a politically motivated violent extremism threat in Canada since the mid-1980s has manifested through Khalistani extremists seeking to use violent means to create an independent nation state called Khalistan within India's Punjab.

▸ Khalistan, Page 8

Under scanner

- Babbar Khalsa International and the International Sikh Youth Federation receiving money inside Canada
- These organisations abuse non-profit and charitable activities for raising funds, report says
- But illegal drug trafficking remains the highest money laundering threat in Canada
- Report appears to vindicate New Delhi's position that pro-Khalistani elements in Canada have been carrying out anti-India activities with impunity

Cargo ropeway snaps in Gujarat, 6 killed

AHMEDABAD, DHNS: Six people were killed after a cargo ropeway carrying construction material snapped at the renowned Pavagadh Hill temple in Panchmahal district on Saturday.

The ropeway was descending with six persons when the incident occurred.

Panchmahal district superintendent of police Haresh Dudhat told *DH*, "The bodies have been sent for post mortem and the cause of the accident is being investigated."

According to district officials, among the deceased are two lift operators, two workers and two others whose identity is being ascertained. The Mahakali Mata temple, worshipped as one of the 51 sacred Shaktipeeths, is located on the top of the Pavagadh hill. The temple, for the past two years, is undergoing redevelopment.

The temple is situated at a height of around 800 metres.

BDA fires lawyer over RERA row, vows to continue under regulator's ambit

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Bangalore Development Authority has sacked the advocate who drafted a request to the Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) to exclude the BDA from its purview.

On September 3, *DH* reported on the BDA's request. Well-placed sources, however, said the request was made by an advocate without consulting the BDA board.

The advocate was not authorised to respond without the consent of the authorities and the response did not reflect the BDA's stance, the sources added.

According to the sources, the BDA now wants to steer clear of the issue and is planning to write to the state government expressing its willingness to abide by the RERA Act.

The BDA, in a written response to a petition over delays in developing Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout, had argued that it was a statutory body and its projects were government-mandated town planning schemes that were not profit-driven.

The response further noted that RERA provisions were framed for private builders, whereas the BDA functioned under statutory obligations.

Stating that it couldn't be considered a promoter or developer, the BDA had requested for an exclusion from the RERA jurisdiction.

Following the response, activists and site allottees had expressed concerns that the BDA's exclusion from RERA jurisdiction would erode accountability for the latter's housing projects.

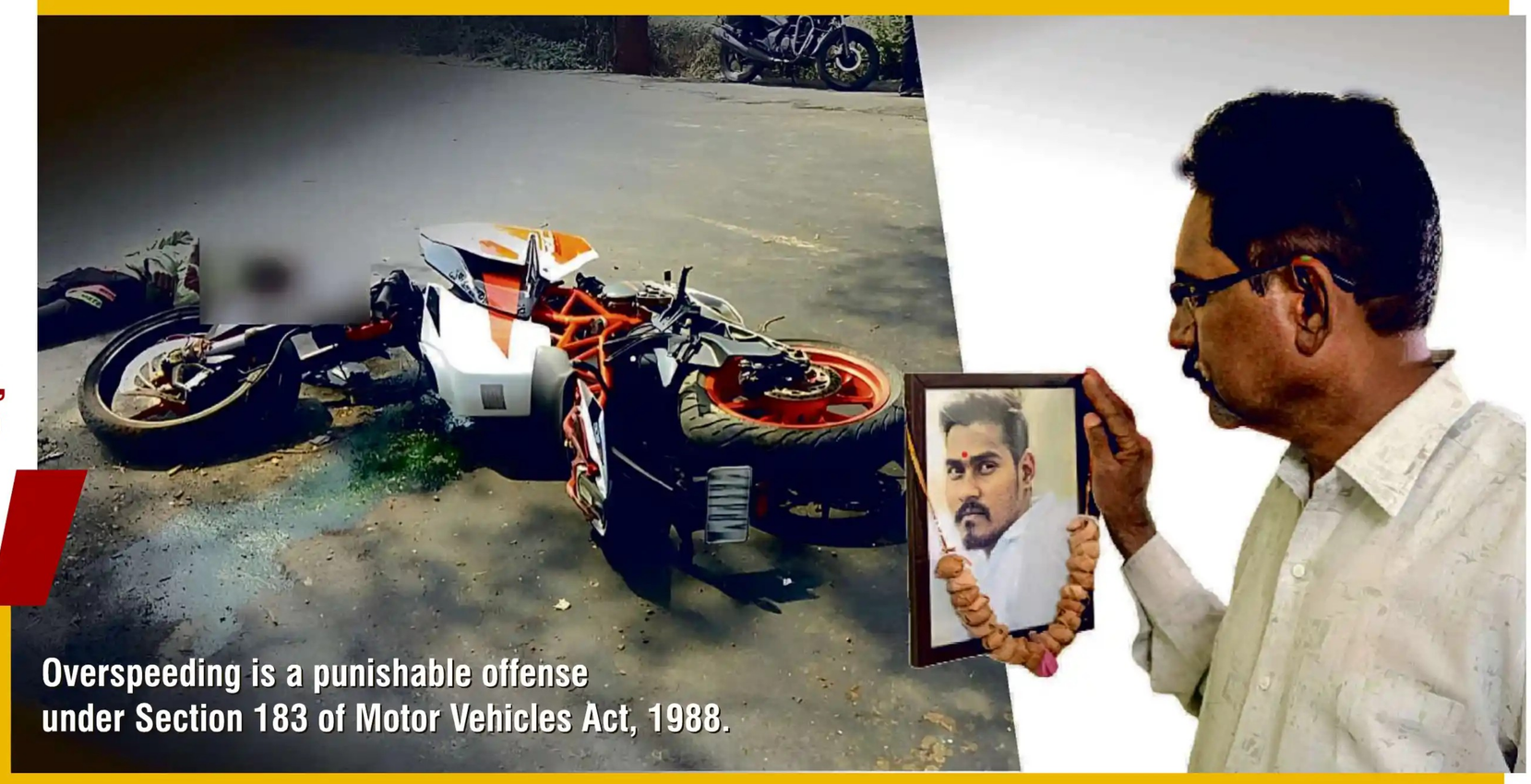
KARNATAKA STATE ROAD SAFETY AUTHORITY

Speed is not the priority: Follow the speed limits.

Sri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister

Sri D.K. Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister

A 24-year-old son died in a road crash as he was speeding on his motorcycle. His wife also succumbed to death due to the unbearable grief of losing her only son. The man who lost his son and wife suggests everyone: "Even if it's a bit late, drive slowly and reach safely." Protect your family from road tragedies.



Overspeeding is a punishable offense under Section 183 of Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.

Sri K Ramalinga Reddy
Hon'ble Minister for Transport & Muzrai at a departmental programme.

A momentary lapse can lead to a life changing trauma for you and your family. Drive responsibly and follow the speed limits.

Dr. N.V. Prasad I.A.S.
Secretary
Transport Department

A.M. Yogeesh I.A.S.
Commissioner
Transport & Road Safety

J. Purushotham
Additional Commissioner & Member Secretary
Karnataka State Road Safety Authority

Protecting public property and refraining from violence
A constitutional fundamental duty of every Indian

SLOW DOWN FOLLOW THE SPEED LIMIT

SPACES UNCHECKED Dim lights, weak patrols, unchecked entry overshadow extended hours

Are Bengaluru's public parks really safe after dark?

ASHWIN B M
BENGALURU, DHNS

For decades, Bengaluru has proudly worn the crown of the 'Garden City.' But as the city expands, a new question arises: are these green lungs still safe, especially after sunset?

Last year's government directive to extend the operational timings of parks, while aimed at providing greater public access, has raised concerns among citizens regarding safety, security, and unchecked public entry.

Given the recent incident where a woman allegedly died after jumping into the lake inside Lalbagh Botanical Garden, the tragedy has spotlighted the pressing question of safety in parks, raising concerns about inadequate surveillance, fencing, and security measures in these breathing spaces.

The government order appears to be a policy more in theory than in practice.

A ground check reveals that operational hours in most parks, including popular BBMP ones, still follow the traditional closing times. The government order, as it turns out, was more of an advisory, allowing them to set their own timings.

While some neighbourhood parks under the BBMP have extended their hours until 10 pm, the idea of a round-the-clock park remains a distant reality.

G Kusuma, Deputy Director (Cubbon Park), Horticulture Department, clarified that the extended operational hours do not apply to parks under the department's purview, such as Cubbon Park and Lalbagh.

Police presence remains reactive

DCPs from both the South and Central divisions acknowledge that their patrolling is a reactive measure, largely dependent on crowd analysis and prior crime reports.

Lokesh B Jagalasar, Deputy Commissioner of Police (South), stated that while parks like Lalbagh have their own private security, police intervention is primarily for "additional security arrangements when we foresee a large footfall or when there is a clear input from the authorities concerned that they need our support."

Akshay M Hakay, DCP (Central), said police presence and patrolling are concentrated in areas identified as having high footfall or a history of crime.

"Otherwise, cameras can be placed inside the parks to increase surveillance," he suggested. However, there are no specific, regular night patrols dedicated solely to parks. Instead, the general night patrolling of the city's streets is expected to cover these areas.

BBMP struggles

For the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), the security of its numerous smaller parks presents a significant challenge.

Chandrashekar MR, Deputy Director (Horticulture), BBMP, explained that these parks are typically looked after by resident "watchers" and "ward staff." These staff members, who often double as gardeners, are permanently stationed in the parks and are the first point of contact for any issues.

"Instances of suicide and mugging are rare," he noted. For larger issues, he pointed to the BBMP citizens' helpline, 1533, as the channel for residents to complain.

On the question of entry and exit regulation, the BBMP's system seems to rely on the honour code. There are no formal monitoring systems and entry is generally unrestricted. This creates a lack of accountability for those who may engage in criminal activities.

Joint Director of Horticulture (Parks and Gardens), Jagadeesh M, provided a comprehensive overview of the department's all-round approach to safety in Lalbagh and Cubbon Park. He detailed the "tree surgery" method used to manage the century-old trees, a step to prevent branches from toppling and injuring visitors.

He also highlighted measures to manage natural threats like beehives and stray dogs. Experts are called in to dislocate bees without harming them, and dogs are sterilised every year and vaccinated in collaboration with the BBMP.

Jagadeesh confirmed the installation of 120 CCTV cameras across Lalbagh, with a dedicated master control room monitored 24/7 by staff in three shifts.

Kusuma G, Deputy Director (Cubbon Park), said: "Cubbon Park is safe for the public. We have not yet received any complaints regarding safety issues from visitors. All streetlights are in working condition, and we have installed 50 CCTV cameras. We also have security guards, and Hoysala police patrols come at night."

She mentioned that new boards with safety information are being set up to guide visitors.

A quiet corner of Cubbon Park after sunset. DH FILE PHOTO

Citizens voice safety concerns

Many regular visitors say that while parks remain a much-needed refuge, the absence of strong safety measures is often felt after dusk.

Pooja, a college student and frequent visitor to Cubbon Park, said the lack of lighting makes some stretches unsettling. "The lighting is uneven at some secluded spots and it feels a bit creepy, especially in the evenings."

For long-time Lalbagh visitor Ramesh Kumar, a retired government employee, the concern is not just about lighting but about the activities in hidden corners. "You see so many couples and young people huddled in corners or shades. You don't know what's going on," he said, adding that "more security guards patrolling would definitely make them feel safer if things go wrong."

Sanjana, an IT professional, also pointed to the isolation of certain areas. "I wish there were more patrols, especially in the lake area of Lalbagh. It can be quite isolated."

For Vivek, an artist, parks remain a creative and emotional outlet but with lingering worries. "Parks are our only escape. While I love the peaceful atmosphere, I do feel that better lighting and a more visible security presence would make it feel safer all the time."

Deepakraj, a regular jogger at Cubbon Park, said the issue is less about infrastructure and more about people being present when needed. "It's about having a human presence, especially during weekends, that can respond immediately if there's a problem. I have seen guards, but they are not always patrolling the deeper sections of the park."

Gautam Sagar, a student, supported the idea of round-the-clock access but warned it would only work if safety is guaranteed. "It's a great idea to open parks 24/7, but only if they can ensure safety. Otherwise, it will just become a place for miscreants."

Ride-hailing apps told to mark no-parking zones

Violations by cab and delivery fleets are a major cause of city bottlenecks

SNEHA RAMESH
BENGALURU, DHNS

To ease traffic congestion caused by the haphazard parking of cabs and delivery two-wheelers, the Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) have directed all cab aggregators and delivery platforms to integrate no-parking zones into their apps.

To enable this, the BTP has created a digital geospatial layer of Restricted Parking Zones across the city. This data is available via a standardised API interface and can be accessed by cab aggregators and delivery portals.

"One of the key contributors to traffic bottlenecks, especially in commercial and high-density corridors, is illegal or unauthorised parking, particularly in designated No Parking or Restricted Parking Zones. Our field observations and enforcement data indicate that a significant proportion of these violations involve vehicles associated with e-commerce delivery and cab aggregator fleets, often due to lack of real-time awareness of parking restrictions at the driver level," Karthik Reddy, Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic), explained to *DH*.

Once the aggregators integrate the API into their apps, it can alert the drivers and delivery agents that they have parked in a no-parking zone.

This could also be used by the company's operations teams to track violations by their staff.

The integration will also help record violations, and repeated violations could be penalised.

A senior traffic police officer said that the issue needed to be addressed immediately.

"This is a big problem, especially in busy commercial streets. Cab drivers randomly park on the roadside, waiting for their customers. However, what they do not realise is that they are obstructing vehicular movement. Our officials try to move them ahead and in many cases, without any other option, we have to impose a fine for parking in a no-parking spot. If the app could alert them to no-parking zones, it will help them avoid fines and also help reduce congestion," said the officer from the north division.

The Bengaluru Traffic Police has created a digital geospatial layer of Restricted Parking Zones across the city.

HC rejects BMTC's appeal on compensation for pedestrian hit by bus

BENGALURU, DHNS: While assessing the loss of dependency of family members in cases of accidents, completed years of age must be considered rather than the running age, the High Court of Karnataka has stated.

Justice Chillakur Sumalatha ruled this while dismissing an appeal filed by the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC).

The accident occurred on July 7, 2023, when a BMTC bus knocked down Siddappa, who was crossing Whitefield Main Road. He sustained grievous injuries and later died during treatment.

His wife, mother, and minor son moved the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, Bengaluru, seeking compensation. On April 1, 2024, the tribunal awarded Rs 21.7 lakh with 6% interest.

The BMTC challenged this order, claiming that a multiplier of '13' should have been applied instead of '14', as applied by the tribunal for calculating the compensation under loss of dependency.

Justice Sumalatha cited earlier judgments and noted that only the completed years of age should be considered, not the running age.

In the instant case, the accident victim was born on January 1, 1978, and the accident occurred on July 7, 2023, making his age 45 years, six months, and six days at the time of the accident. Although he was in his 46th year, his completed years of age were 45, the court noted. Therefore, the tribunal correctly applied the multiplier of '14' for assessing the loss of dependency, the court said.

Insofar as contributory negligence is concerned, the tribunal had held that Siddappa was crossing the road at a location where he should not have ventured, attributing 10% negligence to him.

The tribunal had observed that Siddappa crossed the road where there was no zebra crossing. However, police filed a charge sheet solely against the BMTC driver. The High Court conceded the tribunal's finding that Siddappa's contribution to the accident was 10% and said its findings should not be overturned.

Man with machete arrested after video goes viral

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 33-year-old man seen brandishing a weapon in a public place was tracked down and arrested by police after a video of his actions went viral on social media.

Sharath

Sharath, a resident of St Thomas Town, had reportedly been walking around with a machete, causing panic among the public. His actions came to the attention of the authorities after the video of the incident was widely circulated online.

According to the Pulakeshinagar police, a case was registered against Sharath as soon as the video came to light. He allegedly went into hiding after the case was registered, but police later traced and arrested him.

Graduating officers during the passing-out parade at the Air Force Technical College, Jalahalli, on Saturday.

Engineering officers graduate from Air Force Technical College

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Air Force Technical College, Jalahalli, conducted a ceremonial passing-out parade of the 105th Aeronautical Engineering Course on Saturday.

Seventy-one engineering officers, including 13 from friendly foreign countries, graduated from the college following the completion of 62 weeks of rigorous training, according to a press release.

The parade was marked by a flypast by Dorniers and Mi-17 helicopters. The Air Warrior Drill Team and IAF Band also showcased their skills during the parade, the release said.

The chief guest was Air Marshal Vijay Kumar Garg, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Maintenance Command, IAF. He also inspected the parade as Reviewing Officer (RO) and awarded trophies and medallions to the officers.

The Sword of Honour for first in the order of merit was awarded to Flying Officer Sanapala Madhu. The President's Plaque for the best officer in professional subjects and General Service Training was awarded to Flying Officer Nisarg Sharad Surve. The Chief of Air Staff Medals for first in the order of merit in Electronics and Mechanical streams were awarded to Flying Officer Kunal Phaghal and Flying Officer Bhanupriya Sharma, respectively.

Air Commodore Ashutosh Shrivastava, Commandant of the college, was among those present on the occasion, the release said.

Experts call for early intervention as Multiple Sclerosis cases rise in India

BENGALURU, DHNS

With over two lakh diagnosed cases in India and millions affected globally, Multiple Sclerosis (MS) continues to pose a major health challenge.

Experts at the ICTRIMS 2025 conference, held on Saturday by the Neurology Department of Nimhans, Bengaluru, emphasised the urgent need for early intervention and high-efficacy therapies (HETs) to prevent long-term disability.

Dr Jeremy Hobart, Consultant Neurologist, Derriford Hospital, UK, said that only early identification and stronger therapies can significantly delay progression. Dr Nethravati of NIMHANS highlighted that MS is most often detected between ages 25–35, with women disproportionately affected, urging timely diagnosis to "control MS in our hands."

She also told *DH* that various Neurology departments across the country are working together to create a depository of data on Indians with MS, for research on the disorder in India.

Dr Satish Chandra of Apollo Hospitals noted the rising incidence of MS in India, stressing that advanced therapies must be used early to prevent relapses during people's most productive years.

"We initially thought that the rise in the number of MS cases was just because the technology got better, but we found that was not the case. Instead, there are more cases now because we are following the West's footsteps, with the change in lifestyles and food habits," he told *DH*. He explained that while MS is an incurable disorder, it can be treated and brought under control for one to live "a good life." With the help of medication, therapy, and physiotherapy, "MS cannot be managed with just one course of treatment, we need a multi-disciplinary course of treatment," he said.

He added that while the factors that trigger MS may be genetics, viruses, or lifestyle choices, it can often be prevented with lifestyle changes and managed with early detection.

Experts agreed that personalised care, continuous monitoring, and HETs can preserve brain health, improve quality of life, and redefine MS treatment in India.

Hidden disorder

Multiple Sclerosis is an autoimmune condition of the central nervous system that often goes undiagnosed because its symptoms are not always visible. Delayed detection can lead to relapses and long-term disability.

Those affected may experience fatigue, visual disturbances, cognitive problems, muscle weakness, and depression. International studies show that the condition is more common in women than in men and may be linked to stress or nutritional deficiencies.

Decades of struggle continue despite Section 377 verdict, say activists

BENGALURU, DHNS

Over 120 gender and sexual minority individuals, along with allies from across Karnataka, gathered on Saturday to mark the 7th Gender and Sexual Minorities Liberation Day in Bengaluru.

The event featured discussions on the progress and challenges faced by the community seven years after the Supreme Court's 2018 verdict decriminalising homosexuality.

Manohar Elavarthi, Founder and Executive Director of Sangama, noted that despite the judgment, the government has yet to conduct awareness programmes on IPC Section 377.

"While the judgment has benefited urban, educated sections, it has made little impact on the lives of poor and rural community members," he said, emphasising the need for continued legal struggles and pushing for family and societal acceptance.

Senior advocate Jayna Kothari added that while legal measures are important, "organisations must build awareness to bring sensitivity to society."

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Observing Gender and Sexual Minorities Liberation Day
6 ಸೆಪ್ಟೆಂಬರ್ 2025
6 September 2025
ಸಂಗಮ Sangama

Speakers at the 7th Gender and Sexual Minorities Liberation Day on Saturday. DH PHOTO

Human rights activist Rajesh Srinivas recalled journalist Gauri Lankesh's support for the movement, calling the 2018 judgment a result of "three decades of struggle, not a gift from the court."

Entrepreneur Veena Kulkarni highlighted the need for collective strength, saying, "Our culture and expression are valuable to society. The power to shape society lies within us."

However, despite the progress, the community, especially in smaller towns and villages, still faces heavy discrimination.

Yuvaraj, a GSM (Gender and Sexual Minorities) activist, spoke about the stereotyping of homosexual men, saying, "They either label us as women or trans, just because we act a bit feminine or show our true selves."

Manjunath, also a GSM activist from Hassan, highlighted disparities in treatment based on background, saying, "If they speak English and appear to be from a big city, even the police treat them nicely. But if you're from a smaller city like mine, the cops just pick us up, take us to the station, and demand that we admit to prostitution or drug possession with intent to sell before they'll let us go."

SHOWERS BRING CHAOS

Several parts of the city witnessed moderate to heavy rain on Saturday evening, leading to traffic jams and waterlogging. Until 11.30 pm, Bittasandra recorded 58 mm, RR Nagar 55 mm, Kengeri 54.5 mm, Vidyapeeta 51 mm, Hemmigepura 46 mm, Bommanahalli 42 mm, and Nayandahalli, according to the Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre. The IMD has forecast a generally cloudy sky with light rain for Sunday.. DH PHOTO/MANJUNATH M S

Activists demand 'Safe Deepavali' after cracker explosion

Call for curbs on loud festivities near schools, hospitals

BENGALURU, DHNS

A tragic firecracker mishap that claimed the life of a 15-year-old boy and injured 10 others, including a police constable, during Ganesha festivities in Doddaballapur has stirred citizens' groups to demand a "safe and court-compliant Deepavali."

In a letter addressed to the chief minister, deputy chief minister, and the home and environment ministers, groups including Public Health Action Team (PACT), The Compassionate City, Namma Bengaluru Foundation, and CARE have called for urgent and concerted action.

The incident, which saw a firecracker explosion during an idol immersion procession, has put the spotlight back on firecracker safety, especially ahead of the upcoming festival season.

The letter recalls the devastating 2023 Attibele firecracker tragedy, where a godown explosion claimed 17 lives, condemning the recurring loss of life due to non-compliance with safety norms. The groups praised the government's previous efforts during Ganesha festivities, such as the ban on loud drums and Plaster of Paris (PoP) idols, but expressed concern that the festival still resembled Deepavali with excessive loud explosions.

Citing the Supreme Court's 2018 ruling, they sought a nationwide ban on non-green firecrackers, a strict 8 pm to 10 pm window for bursting green crackers, and prohibitions on their use near schools and hospitals.

They said Station House Officers (SHOs) should be personally accountable for monitoring the manufacture, sale, and distribution of illegal crackers in conjunction with the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) and the BBMP. They also called upon the Transport Department to track illegal inter-state movement of non-compliant crackers, while the Fire Department was asked to be more stringent with licensing.

The groups acknowledged past initiatives, such as the crackdown on online sellers of illegal crackers, but asserted that these efforts must be expanded with greater political will and enforcement.

District admin reclaims govt land worth Rs 11.14 cr

BENGALURU, DHNS: In an anti-encroachment drive on Saturday, the Bengaluru district administration cleared 6.31 acres of government land valued at Rs 11.14 crore, taking it into official possession.

The operation, led by Deputy Commissioner Jagadish G, targeted illegal occupations in various taluks.

According to an official press release, the reclaimed properties include Gomala (government land reserved for animal grazing and other public purposes), lake, and Gunduthopu (land used for planting trees for common use) lands.

The largest portion of the cleared land, measuring 4 acres and valued at an estimated Rs 3.20 crore, was taken back in Gopalapura village of Dasanapur hobli in Bengaluru North taluk. Smaller encroachments were also cleared in Kittaganahalli (10 guntas) and Bettahalli (8 guntas), both in the same hobli.

In Bengaluru South taluk, the drive reclaimed government lake land. A total of 17.08 guntas, valued at Rs 0.90 lakh, was cleared from Survey No. 51 in Devaramachohalli village, while 20 guntas worth Rs 2 crore were taken back from Survey No. 54 in Mailasandra village.

The team also conducted a drive in Anekal taluk, clearing 5 guntas of government land in Halasahalli Tippasandra village. One gunta of Gunduthopu land was also reclaimed in the same village.

The operation continued in Bengaluru East taluk, where 14 guntas of Gomala land with an estimated value of Rs 1.50 crore was cleared from Survey No. 23 in Hadosiddapur village. In Yarappanahalli village, 36 guntas of Gomala land worth Rs 2 crore was also reclaimed.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Jagadish K Nayak, along with office assistants and various taluk tahsildars, were present during the drive, the release added.

Newly appointed civic body chiefs conduct inspections

BENGALURU, DHNS: As the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) and the five city corporations begin separate operations, the commissioners of each civic body inspected various areas under their jurisdiction on Saturday and issued a slew of directions.

Bengaluru Central Commissioner Rajendra Cholan, who visited Majestic and surrounding areas, directed officials to set up mobile toilets to prevent public urination. He also stressed the need to ensure cleanliness on pedestrian ways since Majestic and nearby areas receive heavy footfall.

Pommala Sunil Kumar, Commissioner, Bengaluru North Corporation, held an introductory meeting with officials and asked them to work with dedication towards holistic development. He also urged them to focus on understanding and resolving local issues.

Bengaluru West Corporation Commissioner K V Rajendra reviewed the community cleanliness drive and encroachment removal initiative in his jurisdiction.

Ramesh K N, Bengaluru South Corporation Commissioner, inspected areas that could be prone to flooding. He visited vulnerable locations near Oxford College and the Hongasandra metro station.

In Bengaluru East, stormwater drains and shoulder drains were cleaned, and encroachments were removed from footpaths based on the directions of Commissioner Ramesh D S.

Cleanliness drives were held across the five city corporations.

Liquor sales banned for St Mary's feast

BENGALURU, DHNS: Police have declared a temporary ban on the sale of liquor in the Shivajinagar, Commercial Street, and Bharathinagar police station limits to ensure law and order during the annual Jayanti Mahotsav of Arogya Mate at St Mary's Basilica in Shivajinagar.

The prohibition order, issued by Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh, will be in effect on Monday from 6 am to midnight. The decision comes ahead of a chariot procession and various puja programmes, which are expected to attract up to two lakh devotees.

The procession is scheduled to start from St Mary's Basilica and proceed through MK Street, Shivaji Road, and Broadway Road before returning to the church.

According to the official order, the ban is a precautionary measure to prevent any disruption of law and order by miscreants who may be under the influence of alcohol. The order prohibits the sale of all types of liquor at bars and restaurants, wine shops, pubs, and MSIL outlets.

An exemption has been granted for establishments with CL-4 and CL-6A licences, which include star hotels and clubs. Food services in restaurants and hotels will also be permitted to operate as usual.

Cop booked for rape, cited caste to refuse marriage

BENGALURU, DHNS: A police constable from the Special Action Force (SAF) has been arrested for raping a lawyer after promising to marry her, officials said.

Siddegowda alias Siddu, a native of Jamkhandi, Bagalkot district, was booked and arrested by the Basaveshwara Nagar police after the lawyer filed a formal complaint against him.

At the time of the alleged crime, he was posted with the SAF in Mangaluru.

The lawyer alleged that Siddegowda maintained a relationship with her under the guise of marriage and had sexual intercourse with her after making a solemn promise to marry her. However, he subsequently refused to go through with the marriage, citing their differing caste backgrounds.

Upon learning that a case had been registered against him, Siddegowda reportedly went missing from duty in Mangaluru. A search was launched by the police, which eventually led to his arrest on August 30. He was produced before a court, which has since remanded him in judicial custody.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Ride for Sight Cyclothon: Sahil Bagla and K Parashurama participate; Narayana Nethralaya, Whitefield Branch, Near Sitaramapalya Metro Station; 6.30 am.

Akshara Seva for Environment: Resource Persons – Vinayak Bhatta and Rupa Gururaj; Environment Conservation-Public Relations Division, Karnataka South Region; BNMIT Campus; 9.30 am.

Children's Fair: Inauguration: Arun Sagar, Meera Arun, Guests: KV Prabhakar, BR Naidu, R Sridhar; Jawahar Balabhavan, Cubbon Park; 10 am.

HS Gopalarao's book 'Ba Ra Gopala-Lekha' release: Srinivas V Padigar, BaRa About Gopal: Devarakonda Reddy, DV Paramashivamurthy, R Seshashastri; The Mythic Society, Nrupathunga Road; 10.30 am.

Prof V K Gokak' Award Presentation: Award Recipient: Ananda V Patil, HN Suresh, Narahalli Balasubrahmanya, Shivananda Pilimani, Sridevi Keremane, KG Raghavan, Anil Gokak to be present; Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Race Course Road; 10.30 am.

CULTURAL

Indian Institute of World Culture: Art-music jugalbandi between Venkatalakshmi Sridhar, classical music exponent and veena exponent and M Munimohan, artist, faculty, Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath; 3 pm.

Bharatanatyam stage entry: Presentation: Soumya Sri, Presence: Vidya Rao, Soundarya Srivatsa; The Structural School of Fine Arts; ADA Theatre, JC Road; 10 am.

RELIGIOUS

Brahmaashree Narayanaguru Jayanti: CM Siddaramaiah, DK Shivakumar, Vikyashyananda Swami, Renukanananda Swami, Shivaraj Tangadagi, Uday B Garudachar participate; Ravindra Kalakshetra, JC Road; 5 pm.

Invites to be published in this column should be sent to: **incitytoday@deccanherald.co.in.** Please note that hard copies will not be accepted

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST

Generally cloudy sky with Light rain

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	27.7°C
Minimum	20.4°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	78%
Sunset (Sept 7)	6:27 pm
Sunrise (Sept 8)	6:09 am
Moonrise	5:32 pm
Moonset	4:36 am

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

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WANTED BDA_SITES Anjanapura- Arkavathi Banashankari 6th.Stage, Vishweswaraiah, Kempegowda, Dr.Shivaramkaranth Layout. Contact: SAPTHAGIRI. 9036360366.

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VOTE SHARE SHRINKING Converting support base into votes amid 'leadership void' big test

JD(S) must read writing on wall if it's not to be written off

RASHMI BELUR
BENGALURU, DHNS

Nobody took them lightly, but the Janata Dal (Secular), the state's only mainstream regional party, is on the cusp of facing the biggest nightmare for any political outfit: obscurity.

Displaying sheer repudiation, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said in the Assembly recently that the JD(S), his former party, would be reduced to just 2-3 seats in the next election.

"It's better for you merge your party with BJP," the CM told JD(S) floor leader C B Suresh Babu.

Only one JD(S) lawmaker, and it was not Babu, stood up to Siddaramaiah's doomsaying about the regional party.

"He shouldn't speak in a manner that belittles our party," first-time Sidlaghatta MLA B N Ravikumar said. The irony here was that Siddaramaiah did not even recognise the JD(S) MLA.

Is the JD(S), headed by former prime minister H D Deve Gowda, losing its legacy? Who is really in charge? Will the party merge with BJP? These have become common questions in political circles.

From having won 58 seats in 2004, the JD(S) suffered a massive setback in the 2023 Assembly polls by winning a mere 19 seats (it now has 18), losing ground in much of the old Mysuru region, its strongest turf. Its vote share shrunk to 13.3% from 18.36% in 2018.

The JD(S) is recovering from the severe political and personal damage caused by former Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna's conviction in a rape case, which forced his grandfather Deve Gowda to slip into silence.

Prajwal's father H D Revanna is not actively seen in party activities even as the party faces a challenge in Hassan, Gowda's native district.

Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy is occupied in New Delhi following his induction into Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Cabinet. Most of the heavylifting in terms of building the party's organisation is being done by Kumaraswamy's son Nikhil, who is toiling to carve out a niche for himself after having lost three elections consecutively.

Senior lawmaker G T Deve Gowda - he was not made the floor leader in the Assembly - choosing to keep away from JD(S) has impacted the party's politics in Mysuru region. The Chamundeshwari MLA heads the party's core committee.

Late last month, when JD(S) organised a rally in solidarity with Dharmasthala, hope rekindled among party workers who had questions about the way forward.

JD(S) youth wing president Nikhil Kumaraswamy led the party's Dharmasthala Satya Yatre recently. With H D Kumaraswamy tied up in Delhi following his induction into the NDA government at the Centre, it's up to his son Nikhil to revive the party's fortunes in the state. DH FILE PHOTO

The resuscitative alliance with BJP, if it continues into the 2028 Assembly polls, would pose new challenges to JD(S). When it comes to seat-sharing, the regional party will face a problem in Hassan district, for example, where it might have to cede two constituencies - Belur and Sakleshpur - which the BJP won in 2023. The JD(S) candidates in these segments may switch sides.

"Our party is built from grassroots. Irrespective of who enters or exits, party workers will remain with us," Babu, the Chikkanayakanahalli MLA, says.

"Our only concern is that the public support we have is not converted into votes during elections."

A number of things are being done to revive the party's fortunes. Kumaraswamy, it is said, holds at least one party-related meeting daily, even if he is in Delhi.

Drawing inspiration from communists and BJP, the JD(S) is appointing full-time workers across the state. On the ground, the party's membership drive has resulted in over 20 lakh new enrolments.

Nikhil is being groomed for the long-run. His task is to build his own team without relying too much on sitting MLAs, former MLAs and prospective MLAs.

"Although Nikhil is young, workers have accepted him," former party MLC K A Thippeswamy said.

The party will complete organisational elections and a new state president will be announced, he said. A state-level conference is being planned for newly-elected office-bearers, he said.

"The process will decide whether Kumaraswamy should continue as the state president or if someone else must be elected," the former MLC said.

Relief package to UKP-3 landlosers: State to announce consent award soon

Don't approach court, CM appeals to farmers

VIJAYAPURA, DHNS

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said on Saturday that the state government has decided to award the compensation package for the farmers who parted with their land to the third phase of Upper Krishna Project (UKP) based on the consent of the parties.

The quantum of compensation (consent award) will be decided in a week's time, the chief minister told reporters on the sidelines of offering Bagina to Almatti reservoir.

Siddaramaiah appealed to farmers not to approach the court seeking an enhancement in compensation. This will only further delay implementing the project, he said.

"Our government accords priority to irrigation. I have met the prime minister and the union minister thrice seeking the Centre to issue a gazette notification for increasing the height of Almatti dam from 519 metres to 524 metres under UKP-3. The deputy chief minister made five trips to Delhi... But our efforts have not yielded desired results. But we will continue our efforts to get gazette notification...," Siddaramaiah said.

On former BJP MP Prathap Simha moving the high court against inviting writer Banu Mushtaq to inaugurate the Mysuru Dasara, Siddaramaiah said, "Let the court decide it. But why did they not oppose when Nisar Ahmed inaugurated the Dasara?. Why did they not protest when Tipu Sultan and Mirza Ismail were part of the Dasara procession?, the chief minister questioned.

The BJP is politicising Banu Mushtaq's selection for the Dasara inauguration. The government will give a befitting reply, he said.

On the government's decision to reintroduce the ballot papers in the upcoming local bodies polls, Siddaramaiah defended it, saying ballot papers are being reintroduced to end the confusion revolving around EVMs.

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, ministers M B Patil, Shivanand Patil and R B Thimmapur were present.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, his deputy D K Shivakumar and Industries Minister M B Patil offer bagina to Krishna river at Almatti reservoir in Vijayapura district on Saturday. DH PHOTO

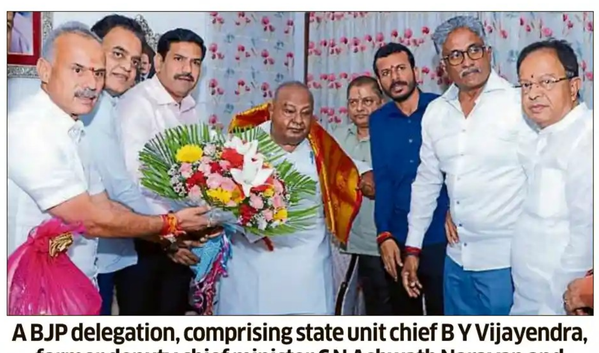
Ballot papers: Take political parties into confidence, Gowda tells SEC

BENGALURU, DHNS

Former prime minister H D Deve Gowda on Saturday said the State Election Commission (SEC) must take all parties into confidence before switching to ballot papers in local body polls.

Gowda, the JD(S) supremo, was speaking to reporters after a BJP delegation met him at his Padmanabhanagar residence.

The Congress government has decided to ask the SEC to use ballot papers for all local body polls, citing lack of trust in EVMs.



A BJP delegation, comprising state unit chief B Y Vijayendra, former deputy chief minister C N Ashwath Narayan and others, calls on former prime minister and JD(S) supremo H D Deve Gowda at latter's residence in Bengaluru on Saturday.

"The (SEC) has to take the decision. Whether the (SEC) will call all parties and take their opinion... it has to take into confidence all parties," Gowda said.

On a BJP delegation visiting him, Gowda said they came to congratulate him for his appreciation for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's efforts at the recent Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit.

'No rift with JD(S)'

Both Vijayendra and Narayan said there was no rift between BJP and JD(S).

"The JD(S) will have to make efforts to strengthen itself. We have to make our efforts. But there's an alliance and JD(S) is a part of the NDA. We're working together in a pro-people manner," Narayan said.

Dereliction of duty: Gynec suspended

▸ **BIDAR, DHNS:** The commissioner of Health and Family Welfare department has issued orders suspending Dr Irshana, obstetrician and gynecologist at Government Mother and Child Hospital, Basava Kalyana, on charges of dereliction of duty.

She has been transferred to community health centre at Kudalasangama in Hungund taluk (Bagalkot district). A pregnant woman had died due to excessive bleeding after delivering a baby at the Basava Kalyana hospital. The doctor was found guilty of negligence in the case following inquiry.

Ganapati Bhat secretary to panel probing charges against Justice Varma

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Former IRS officer Ganapati Bhat, who retired as Principal Chief Commissioner of Income Tax (Karnataka & Goa Region), has been appointed secretary to the three-member committee formed under the Judges (Inquiry) Act to probe allegations against Justice Yashwant Varma, who is facing impeachment.

Ganapati Bhat

The appointment order for Bhat, a 1989-batch IRS officer from Uttara Kannada district, was issued by Speaker Om Birla on Friday.

The committee comprises SC judge Justice Aravind Kumar, Chief Justice of the Madras High Court Manindra Mohan Shrivastava, and senior advocate B V Acharya.

Bhat, whose career spans over 30 years, has also served as Principal Chief Commissioner of Income Tax (International Taxation) in Delhi, Additional Secretary in Lok Sabha, & Director General of Income Tax Investigation (K'taka, Goa & Kerala).

If the panel finds Justice Varma guilty of the charges of corruption, impeachment proceedings will begin in Parliament.

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No: KNNL/GLBC-2/DB/Tender/25-26/694 Date:- 04.09.2025

CORRIGENDUM

With reference to this office tender notification No. 492 dated: 04.08.2025 through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal following modification are made with respect to Tender Schedule.

Sl No.	Work Indent Number
1	KNNL/2024-25/LI/ WORK_INDENT **2875**

1)Last Date for Submission of completed e-tendering documents is on 18.09.2025 up to 4.30 PM.2)First Electronic Document (Technical BID) will be opened on 19.09.2025 at 5.00 PM, 3)Second Electronic Document (financial Bid) will be opened after approval to the technical bid from the competent authority.

For more details visit website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in or at undersigned in all working days during office hours.

DIPR/BGK/RO-NO-261/KSMCA/2025-26 **Sd/-Executive Engineer, KNNL, GLBC Dn No. 2 Jamkhandi.**

Government of Karnataka
Office of the Executive Engineer, Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, Haveri.
Email: eeprednhvr@gmail.com Tel No. 08375-232454

E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

This office letter No.22/EE/PREDn/HVR/PB-2/Tender/2025-26/3094 Dated:03-09-2025

On 03-09-2025 through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Tender Notification has been issued for the following work Indent No. 17783/Call-2, 17485, 17581(SC), 18281, 18284, 18310, 18344, 18148, 18300, 18496 Last date for submission of tender receipt is assigned on Dated: 11-09-2025 (upto 4:00 PM). For further additional information, any changes & queries visit http://www.kppp.karnatak.gov.in.

Sd/- Executive Engineer
dipr/hvr/372/2025-26 P.R.E. Division, Haveri

GULBARGA ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(Wholly owned government of Karnataka undertaking)
CIN Number: U04010KA2002SGC030436
No. GESCOM/SEE (Procurement)/EE/AEE/25-26/41932-36 Date: 04.09.2025

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (KPP portal mode only)

Manufacture and supply of LT Wiring Kits to following O&M Zones in GESCOM as per GESCOM Specifications.
PC-1475: O&M Zone, GESCOM, Kalaburagi **(Tender Amount: Rs. 1213.09 Lakhs),**
PC-1476: O&M Zone, GESCOM, Ballari **(Tender Amount: Rs. 818.65 Lakhs)**
Dates: Bid documents available at KPP Portal: on or after 08.09.2025, Last Date for Bid submission, Opening of Technical Bid and opening of price Bid: As per KPP Portal.
Bidder Qualifying Requirements: As per tender documents, For additional information Contact: Superintending Engineer El., Procurement, Corporate Office, GESCOM, Kalaburagi-585102. Mobile: 94484 99997. Web Site Address: www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in. For information about the KPP portal, contact the helpline at +91 – 8046010000 / 8068948777/ 9240214000 / 9240214001or e-mail address: **support@eprochelpdesk.com**

DIPR/Kalaburagi/481/KSMC&A/2025-26 **Sd/- Superintending Engineer (Procurement), GESCOM, Corporate Office, Kalaburagi**

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು, ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಕಲಬುರಗಿ ವಿಭಾಗ ಕಲಬುರಗಿ
ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ

ಸಂ.ಕಾನಿಅ/ಲೋಇ/ಕವಿ/ತಾಶಾ–3/ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ/2025–26/ 3304 ದಿನಾಂಕ : 06–09–2025

1) ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ ವಿವರ : ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜೀಯರರು, ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ , ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಕಲಬುರಗಿ ವಿಭಾಗ ಕಾರ್ಯಲಯದಿಂದ ಅಪೆಂಡಿಕ್ಸ್–ಇ 5054 , (ತೆವಣಿ) ಮತ್ತು 2059&2216 ನರ್ವಹಣೆ (10) ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಟೆಂಡರ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: **22134, 27520, 21885 & 23282, 20827, 20826, 24024,24022, 27030, 27031, 23281, 27596 (Reserved For SC Category)** 2) **ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ : ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ರೂ. 20–00 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು, ಗರಿಷ್ಠ ರೂ. 500–00 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು** 3) ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರ ಅರ್ಹತೆ ವಿವರ : ಈ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗೆ ಟೆಂಡರ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವವರು, ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಾಲ್ಕನೇ ದರ್ಜೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಮೇಲ್ಪಟ್ಟ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಾಗಿರಬೇಕು. 4) ಇ.ಎಮ್.ಡಿ.ಮೊತ್ತದ **ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ರೂ. 41,500–00, ಗರಿಷ್ಠ ರೂ. 6,36,000–00,** 5) ಪ್ರೀ ಬಿಡ್ ಮೀಟಿಂಗ್ : **20/09/2025 (11.00 Hrs.)** 6) ಟೆಂಡರ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಹಾಗು ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟೀಕರಣ ಕೋರುವ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ : **22/09/2025 (17.30 Hrs.)** 7) ಟೆಂಡರ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: **23/09/2025 (16.00 Hrs.)** 8) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆವುಗೊಳಿಸುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ : **24/09/2025 (16.30 Hrs.)** 9) ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆವುಗೋಳಿಸುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ : **26/09/2025 (16.30 Hrs.)** 10) ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ : ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜೀಯರರು, ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ವಿಭಾಗ ಕಲಬುರಗಿ ಕಚೇರಿ, 11) ಸೂಚನೆ : ಜೆ.ಎಸ್.ಟಿ ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕವಾಗಿ ನೀಡಲಾಗುವುದು 12) ಅಂತರ್ಜಾಲ ತಾಣದ ವಿಳಾಸ : https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in, 13) **ಗಮನಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ಅಂಶಗಳು : ಟಿಪ್ಪಣಿ:1)** ಈ ಕೆಳಗೆ ಸಹಿ ಮಾಡಿರುವವರು ಯಾವುದೇ ಕಾರಣಗಳನ್ನು ನೀಡದೆ ಟಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯನ್ನು ಮಂದೂಡುವಿಕೆ/ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ರದ್ದುಗೊಳಿಸುವ/ ಟಂಡರ್ ನಿರಾಕರಿಸುವ ಹಕ್ಕನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ. 2) ಇನ್ನು ಮೂಂದೆ ಟಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವುದೆ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳು ಇದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ದಿನ ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಬದಲಾಗಿ ವಿದ್ಯುನ್ಮಾನ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆ ವೇದಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಸಹಿ/–
ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರರು,
ವಾ.ಸಾ.ಸಂ.ಇ.ಕಲಬುರಗಿ/473/2025–26/ದೇಶಪಾಂಡೆ ಪಬ್ಲಿಸಿಟಿ ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕಲಬುರಗಿ

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಸಹಾಯಕ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಸಂರಕ್ಷಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಚೇರಿ,
ಜಮಖಂಡಿ ಪ್ರಾದೇಶಿಕ ಉಪವಿಭಾಗ, ಜಮಖಂಡಿ
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS, BAGALKOTE TERRITORIAL SUB DIVISION, JAMAKHANDI
ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 7348962827 ಇ–ಮೇಲ್: acftjkd@gmail.com
ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಸಅಸಂ/ಜೆಕೆಡಿ/ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ:06–09–2025

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕರಿಗೆ ತಿಳಿಯಪಡಿಸುವುದೇನೆಂದರೆ, 2025–26 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿಗೆ ಜಮಖಂಡಿ ಪ್ರಾದೇಶಿಕ ಉಪವಿಭಾಗದ ಜಮಖಂಡಿ ವಲಯ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಂಪಾ ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಂಗಡ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಸಸಿ ಬೆಳೆಸುವ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ, ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳಲು ನೊಂದಾಯಿತ ಅರ್ಹ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಿದೆ. ಅರ್ಹಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಇ–ಆಡಳಿತ ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಅಥವಾ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ https://kppp.karnataka.gov.inನಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಿದಂತೆ, ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 18–09–2025** ರಂದು **ಮಧ್ಯಾಹ್ನ 02–00** ಗಂಟೆ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ. ಇನ್ನುಳಿದ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಖಚಿತಪಡಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಬಹುದು ಸದರಿ ದಿನಾಂಕಗಳಂದು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸ್ವೀಕೃತವಾಗದೇ ಇದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಮರುಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಸ್ವಯಂಚಾಲಿತವಾಗಿ 7 ದಿನ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.
ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ರಜೆದಿನಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊರತುಪಡಿಸಿ ಕಚೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ಸಹಾಯಕ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಸಂರಕ್ಷಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿ,
ಜಮಖಂಡಿ ಉಪವಿಭಾಗ, ಜಮಖಂಡಿ
ವಾ.ಸಾ.ಇ/ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟ/261/ದೇಶಪಾಂಡೆಪಬ್ಲಿಸಿಟಿ/2025–26

North Western Karnataka Road Transport Corporation
Civil Engineering Department, Central Office, HUBBALLI.
No. NWKT/EE/HBL/DB(T)/542/2025-26 Date: 06-09-2025

Notice Inviting Tender

Item rate tenders in Two Cover System are invited through GOK KPP Portal as per KTPP Standard Tender Documents for the following works from appropriate class of Registered Class–1 and above Civil Contractors in KPWD/CPWD/MES as per the schedule given below. Eligible contractors can participate in the tender by confirming the other details which will be published in **https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** KPPP Portal. Any changes in Tender Notification will be published in KPPP Portal only; separate paper notification will not be issued.

Last date & Time for Submission of tender: 06.10.2025, 16.00Hrs

Name of the Work	Notification No.	Amount put to tender
Balance essential works in depot Karwar.	NWKRTC/2025-26/ BD/WORK_INDENT62	Rs.5,03,11,210/- EMD: Rs.7,54,668/-

For further details visit **https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** for any "HELP" regarding uploading of Tender Documents, please call on help desk: +91-9240214000 / +91-9240214001 / +91-8068948777 / +91-80 46010000, 0836-2332383 of all working hours. Bidders can contact this office for further details in all working hours or Call 0836-2332383.

वासासंइ/धा/दिशा/631/2025–26 **Sd/- Executive Engineer, NWKRTC C.E. Department, Central Office Hubballi.**

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PUBLIC WORKS DEPT. DIVISION, GADAG.
Phone No : 08372-238782 Fax No. 08372-237268
E.Mail : eepwdgad@gmail.com
No: EEPWDGDG PB- 1 :Diferent Head : 2025-26/2236 Dated : 06-09-2025

Tender Corrigendum and Time Extension Notification

The Executive Engineer, Public works department. Division, Gadag invites itemwise tenders from eligible tenderers of 24 work of total amount of Rs - **878.85** Lakh (Min estimate amount: Rs- **06.00** Lakhs to Max Estimate Amount: **94.00** Lakhs) for the Different Head of account on behalf of the Hon'able Governor of Karnataka as per Standard Bid Document KW-1, 2, and 3 through http://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in/

Work Indent No : Part-1 : 24469-ST, 24461, 23882, 23880, 23884, 24345-Category-1, 24290, 24299-ST, 24441, 23813 Category-2A, 23821, 23853-SC, 23861-SC, 24300 -Category-1, 24008 Category-2A, 23934, 24287-SC, 24318, 24337-ST, 24319, 25898-SC, 27024

This office tender notification No:-2151 Dated : 29-08-2025 Read as W.I. 25898-SC, Instead of 24007-SC, 27024 Instead of 24452.
(a) Last Date for Clarification up to : **12-09-2025** (b) Last Date for Receipt of Tenders : **15-09-2025** Noon 4.00 PM (c) Opening of Technical /Financial Bid Date : **16-09-2025** (d) Opening of Financial Bid Date : **17-09-2025**

This office tender notification No:-2151 Dated : 29-08-2025 Read as **W.I.-27216** Instead of 24447, **27209** Instead of 24450, and This office tender notification No: 2007 Dated : **20-08-2025** W.I. **27530 Category-1** Instead of 24138- Category-1 and **27449 Category 2A** Instead of 24525 Category-2A and There is no change in calender of events.

GST shall be paid separately as per prevailing Government Order. The increase in GST shall not be paid in the extended period of contract for which the contractor alone is responsible for delay as determined by the authority while granting the extension of time.

DIPR/Gadag/KSMCA/270/2025-26 **Sd/- Executive Engineer, P.W.D. Division, Gadag.**

Dharmasthala case: Senthil sues Janardhana Reddy for 'slander'

Congress MP calls charges 'politically motivated'

BENGALURU, DHNS

Congress MP from Tamil Nadu Sasikanth Senthil on Saturday said he had filed a criminal defamation suit against Karnataka BJP MLA Gali Janardhana Reddy for linking him to the "conspiracy" against Dharmasthala.

Last month, Reddy claimed that Senthil "orchestrated" the Dharmasthala case. Senthil asserted that he had no connection with the case and rejected the allegations.

"Recently, the Gangavathi MLA, based on some WhatsApp message, took my name, accusing me of being a scriptwriter and the mastermind (behind allegations against Dharmasthala). Initially, I felt I shouldn't respond to such childish comments. But this got built up every day," Senthil said, describing it as "a coordinated right-wing attempt".

Sasikanth Senthil

A former Karnataka cadre IAS officer, Senthil served as deputy commissioner of Dakshina Kannada, the district where Dharmasthala is located.

"In public interest and my own right against defamation, I have taken legal action. I have filed a criminal defamation case against Janardhan Reddy, who took my name. The court has taken cognisance of it. He will be served a notice. He (Reddy) will have to come and tell the court the basis on which he made allegations against me," Senthil said, adding that the next hearing is scheduled on September 11.

He warned that those making up stories about him in connection with the case would face criminal action.

"Allegations are being made against me stating that I'm from TN and he (complainant) is also from Tamil Nadu. There was a police officer here from Tamil Nadu who is directly in my opposition to me there. I don't know why his name has not come up," Senthil said.

The MP said "politically motivated" allegations were being hurled at him because of his opposition to the right wing.

Let CBI, NIA probe Congress MP's role: Reddy

Gangavathi MLA Janardhana Reddy has demanded that the Dharmasthala case should be probed by the CBI or the NIA, including the suspected role of MP Sasikanth Senthil in 'the conspiracy to defame the temple town,' reports DHNS from Ballari.

He told a press conference here on Saturday that apart from YouTuber Sameer, Left-wing elements and urban naxals had a role to play in the episode.

They hatched a conspiracy by involving Chinnaiah and Sujatha Bhat, he said. Senthil should also be questioned in the case, like Chinnaiah, Girish Mattennavar and Mahesh Thimmarodi, Reddy said.

Since that is unlikely, the NIA or CBI should investigate the case, he said. The MLA added that he would face the defamation case filed by Senthil against him.

Complainant-witness remanded in judicial custody

He is shifted to Shivamogga prison; SIT steps up probe

MANGALURU, DHNS

The JMFC court in Belthangady on Saturday remanded the complainant-witness to judicial custody after he was produced by the Special Investigation Team (SIT).

He was subsequently shifted to Shivamogga prison under tight security.

The SIT's 15-day custody of the complainant-witness ended on Saturday. He had been arrested on August 23 and was initially remanded in SIT custody till September 3, which was later extended till September 6.

Sources confirmed that the complainant-witness has now been remanded to judicial custody, while the investigation into the Dharmasthala mass burial case will continue.

The SIT sources said the team questioned Vittal Gowda, uncle of Sowjanya (a second PUC who was allegedly raped and murdered), on Friday night, and continued interrogating activists Jayant T, Girish Mattanavar, and YouTuber Abhishek on Saturday.

The SIT is intensifying its investigation into the alleged Dharmasthala mass burial case, pursuing multiple leads and questioning several individuals.

The probe is being carried out rigorously daily, with officials verifying documents, recording statements from people connected to the case, and preparing detailed reports to piece together the sequence of events, sources said.

The SIT has maintained that it is exploring every possible angle and is expected to summon more individuals for questioning in the coming days.

The protection granted to the complainant-witness under the Witness Protection Scheme, 2018, is set to expire on September 9. "Since this is a major case, the protection extended to the complainant-witness may have to be continued," the SIT sources said.

Any modification to the protection order will be decided by the competent authority based on the latest report from the DySP of Bantwal Sub-Division regarding threats to the complainant, they added.

DH CHANGEMAKERS TO WATCH IN 2026

Nominations Open

Each year, DH recognises extraordinary people who persevere and overcome difficult odds to usher in change.

Since the DH Changemaker awards were launched in 2019, we have identified 150-plus trailblazers from across Karnataka in areas such as community empowerment, health, conservation, entrepreneurship, and the arts.

This year, it is time to begin our search for 15 Changemakers -- we seek to highlight their efforts, celebrate their achievements, and share their stories. On New Year's Day in 2026, we will publish print, web and video stories about these achievers.

We invite nominations from readers starting today. Send in details of individuals (below 45) and teams that you think deserve the Changemakers title and honour.

The last date for submitting nominations is September 18, 2025. Scan the QR code to make a nomination.

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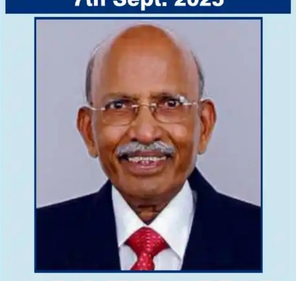
BIRTH CENTENARY
7th Sept. 2025



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Khalistani extremists get financial support...

Khalistan, From Page 3

The latest report said the 'Politically Motivated Violent Extremism (PMVE) encourages "the use of violence to establish new political systems, or new structures and norms within existing systems."

"While PMVE may include religious elements, actors are more focused on political self-determination or representation, rather than racial or ethnic supremacy," it said.

Several terrorist entities listed under the Criminal Code in Canada that fall under the PMVE category, such as Hamas, Hezbollah and the Khalistani violent extremist groups Babbar Khalsa International and the International Sikh Youth Federation, have been observed by law enforcement and intelligence agencies to receive financial support originating from Canada, the report pointed out.

In 2022, the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada's (FINTRAC) Operational Alert on Terrorist Activity Financing had identified Hezbollah as the second most frequently identified international terrorist entity to receive outgoing Canadian funds.

"Khalistani extremist groups supporting violent means to establish an independent state within Punjab, India, are suspected of raising funds in a number of countries, including Canada," the report revealed. "These groups previously had an extensive fundraising network in Canada but now appear to consist of smaller pockets of individuals with allegiance to the cause but seemingly no particular affiliation to a specific group."

Abuse of non-profit and charitable activities was a common concern for the organisations mentioned.

"The misuse of the charitable and NPO sectors has been observed as a prominent financing method used by Hamas and Hezbollah. Khalistani violent extremist groups have also been known to use networks to solicit donations from diaspora communities to raise and move funds, including through NPOs," it pointed out.

Despite these observations, it is estimated that revenue generation through NPO abuse represents a relatively small percentage of operational budgets of terrorist groups overall, it clarified.

Thaw in sight as Trump talks...

Trump, From Page 1

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, too, later told journalists in New Delhi that the PM had always attached "enormous importance" to India's partnership with the US. Modi always had "a very good personal equation" with Trump, added Jaishankar. The exchange of positive vibes between New Delhi and Washington came amid the stalemate in reaching a trade pact. With no breakthrough yet in negotiations, Trump had on July 30 announced a 25% tariff on Indian goods.

He had also slammed New Delhi for buying defence hardware and energy from Russia. Trump had called the economies of India and Russia "dead" and announcing an additional 25% duty on Indian goods, taking the tariffs to 50%.

Indian women live 4 years longer than men

Life expectancy, From Page 3

The poorest figures for both genders come from Chhattisgarh – 62.4 years for men and 67.1 years for women. Out of 22 bigger states, seven are yet to touch the national average. While Bihar (69.3 years) and Jharkhand (69.5) are knocking at the doors, it will take some time for Assam, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

The gap between the rural and urban life expectancy has also narrowed down significantly from 1970-75 to 2019-23. There is a difference of about four years in urban-rural life expectancy at birth and about 1.5 years in urban-rural life expectancy at age 70.

The SRS report on causes of death shows cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in all the regions, with the highest proportion in the east (35.1%) and the lowest in the central region (22.9%).

Respiratory infections account for a substantial proportion of deaths in all the regions, with the maximum reported in the west (12.7%), followed by the central region (12.3%). The highest proportions of deaths due to diabetes mellitus is observed in the southern region (4.6%).

Malignant and other neoplasm are responsible for the maximum proportion of deaths in the Northeast (9.0%), followed by the southern (7.1%), northern (6.4%), western regions (6.0%).

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PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that the immovable properties situated at M.G. Palya Village, Kylancha Hobli, Ramanagara Taluk, Bengaluru South District, Karnataka are proposed to be purchased by Mr. Sagar Patel L, Mrs. Shobha Vikram and Mrs. Indra Kumari.
Property Details & Boundaries: (1) Sy. No. 56/1 – 11 Guntas East: Road, West: Land of M.S. Vinod Kumar, North: Sy. No. 56/4, Jayabharathi Co. (Late P. Prabhakar), South: Sy. No. 56/2, Land of Suresh R. & Kumar R.(2) Sy. No. 55/4 - 1 Acre 6 Guntas East: Land of Shashikala, Suresh R. & Kumar R., West: Land of Sharadamma (Late Simpregowda), North: Sy. No. 56/3, Jayabharathi Co. (Late P. Prabhakar), South: Land of Jayamma Kom Maranna(3) Sy. No. 55/5 - 17 GuntasEast: Land of Suresh R. & Kumar R., West: Land of Sharadamma, Ramaiah, Eerappa & Puttabairappa, North: Land of M.S. Vinod Kumar, South: Land of M. Varija Kom Kesavamurthy(4) Sy. No. 55/6 - 10 Guntas East: Land of Suresh R. & Kumar R., West: Land of Ramaiah, Eerappa & Puttabairappa, North: Land of Jayamma Kom Maranna, South: Land of M. Shivakumar bin Late M. Maregowda Any person/ institution having claim, charge, lien or objection must notify the undersigned with documents within 15 days of this publication, failing which the transaction shall proceed and no claims will be entertained.
Sd/- Mr. Sagar Patel
Bengaluru.
Ph: 8088895855

MAHESHWARI SOUHARDA CREDIT CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LTD
#69, Sirsi Circle, Chamrajpet, Bangalore
Phone No : 080-48544445 / 26704425
E mail: mscltd2016@gmail.com
Regd. No. RSR/SOUKA/REG/100/4371/2015-2016
NOTICE OF AGM
Notice is hereby given that 9th Annual General Body Meeting of the Co-operative for the F.Y. 2024-25 will be held on Sunday, 21.09.2025 at 11.00 AM.
Venue: Maheshwari Bhavan, Okalipuram, Bangalore - 21
By The Order of Board of Directors
Sd/- Shobha. D, CEO

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA
EXTRA-ORDINARY APPELLATE JURISDICTION
SPECIAL LEAVE PETITION (CIVIL) No. 27351 OF 2024
WITH PRAYER FOR INTERIM RELIEF
RAJENDRA SETHIA ...Petitioner(s)/Appellant(s)
VERSUS
AMTUSALAM LUBNA AKHTAR AND OTHERS Respondent(s)
To,
1. SAUD AHAMED MAJOR S/O LATE SYED ABDUL KHADER, R/O NO. 562, 8TH MAIN, 4TH BLOCK, KORAMANGALA, BANGALORE, KARNATAKA — PID: 199846/2025 FOR R[9] IN SLP(C) NO.27351/2024 (SEC IV-A)
2. PRASUN BANERJEE S/O M. BANERJEE, NO. 26/1A, 1st CROSS, MILLERS ROAD, BANGALORE-16, KARNATAKA — PID: 199847/2025 FOR R[10] IN SLP(C) NO.27351/2024 (SEC IV-A)
WHEREAS the Petition for Special Leave to Appeal with prayer for interim relief along with application for CONDONATION OF DELAY IN FILING, EXEMPTION FROM FILING O.T., APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION, SUBSTITUTED SERVICE above mentioned (copy enclosed) filed in the Registry by Ms. B. VIJAYALAKSHMI MENON, Advocate on behalf of the Petitioner(s) above named was listed for hearing before this Court on 14th November, 2024, when the Court was pleased to pass the following order:-
1. Heard the learned Senior counsel appearing for the petitioner and perused the material placed on record.
2. Delay condoned.
3. Issue notice, returnable after four weeks
4. Dasti service, in addition, is permitted.
5. The parties are directed to maintain status-quo as regards the nature, character and possession of the suit property."
AND WHEREAS, the matter above-mentioned was listed before Ld. Registrar's Court on 21st August, 2025, When the following order was passed:-
"Counter Affidavit has already been filed on behalf of respondent nos.1 to 8 along with application for exemption from filing official translation.
Ld. Counsel for the petitioner has filed an application for substituted service by way of publication with regard to service on respondent nos.9 and 10. Allowed. Four weeks time, is granted to Ld. counsel for the petitioner to file proof of publication in this regard.
List again on 07.10.2025."
NOW, THEREFORE, TAKE NOTICE that the above petition with prayer for interim relief along with application for EXEMPTION FROM FILING O.T., APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION will be posted for hearing before this Court in due course and you may enter appearance before this Court either in person or through an advocate on record of this Court duly appointed by you in that behalf within 30 days from the date of service of notice. You may thereafter show cause to the Court on the day that may subsequently be specified as to why delay in filing SLP delay in filing SLP be not condoned and Special Leave Petition and interim relief as prayed be not granted and the resultant appeal be not allowed.
You may file your affidavit in opposition to the petition as provided under Rule 14(1) of Order XXI, S.C.R.2013 within 30 days from the date of receipt of notice or not later than 2 weeks before the date appointed for hearing, whichever be earlier, but shall do so only by setting out the grounds in opposition to the questions of law or grounds set out in the SLPs and may produce such pleadings and documents filed before the Court/Tribunal against whose order the SLP is filed and shall also set out the grounds for not granting interim order or for vacating interim order if already granted.
TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that if you fail to enter appearance as aforesaid, no further notice shall be given to you even after the grant of special leave for hearing of the resultant appeal and the matter above mentioned shall be disposed of in your absence.
COUNSEL FOR PETITIONER — ASSISTANT REGISTRAR
Ms. B. Vijayalakshmi Menon(Advocate),
New Delhi.
Dated: 22nd August, 2025

KARNATAKA POSTAL and TELECOM EMPLOYEES HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LTD.,
(No. JRB:AMD:14:2009-2010)
No. 7, Sandesh Bhavan, 3rd Main, 1st Stage, Postal Colony, Sanjaynagar, Bangalore-560094. Ph No: 080-2351 1414 / 2341 1416
60th ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING NOTICE
It is hereby notified that the 60th Annual General Body Meeting of the Society for the year 2024-25 will be held on **Sunday the 14th September 2025 at 2-00 P.M. under the President ship of Sri JAYARAMAIAH, at Ramana Maharshi Center for Learning, Post Office Road, Sanjaynagar, Bangalore-560094.** All the Society Members are requested to kindly attend the General Body Meeting.
As per Society Bye-law No. 7(6) Associated and Nominal Members are not eligible for attending the general body meeting.
For and on behalf of the Board of Management
Sd/- (MAHESH. M.N), Secretary, K.P.T.E.H.C.S. LTD.,
Place: Bengaluru Date: 06-09-2025

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

General

WANTED TELE CALLERS Experienced female. Accommodation also available. Basaveshwaranagara Bangalore. 8217593354/ 9964617174

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WANTED HELPERS BOYS for Automobile Company J.C. Road, Bangalore Contact: 9844008922/ 9611728254 (11am to 5pm)

Wanted

CUSTOMER SUPPORT Executives with Computer and Communication Skills Location Yeshwanthpur/ Mahalakshmi Layout 2-3 Years experience Email: chandrashekar@synergics.in / Mob: 9341856562

Manager

JAMES BOND Dry cleaners requires store Managers (Candidates with minimum 2 years experience in Dry cleaning only) Salary: 18,000 to 25,000 + incentives Location: Konankunte or Indiranagar or Gandhi Bazaar, Bangalore Timings: 9:30am to 9pm, Call: 8050666007

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"MAITHRY VIDYANIKETHAN" NRI.Layout Ramamurthynagar Bengaluru. Required Trained, Experienced TEACHERS to`teach English`& Social Science for`primary and`Middle school, (Ladies preferred) Send`Resume`to: maithry2003@gmail.com or`Call: 9900311166/ Walk-in Interview

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(Affiliated to VTU, Belagavi, Approved by AICTE New Delhi Accredited by NAAC, Regd. by Government of Karnataka)
Somanahalli Kanakpura Road, Bengaluru- 560116.
Contact: 9448452508. Website: www.apsce.ac.in
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INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR
PRINCIPAL - 1 / PROFESSORS - 3
ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS - 5
ASSISTANT PROFESSORS - 10
PLACEMENT OFFICER - 1
(with MBA qualification)
AS PER AICTE NORMS
DEPARTMENT OF: COMPUTER SCEINCE & INFORMATION SCIENCE & ENGINEERING
APS COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, Somanahalli, Kanakapura Road, B'lore.
Interested candidates are informed to send their resume within seven days from the date of this advertisement to the Principal, APS College of Engineering through Email: principal.apsce@gmail.com.
NOTE: Candidates with MCA qualification are not eligible to apply.
(CA Dr. Vishnu Bharath Alampalli) President — (Prof. A. Prakash) General Secretary

REQUIRED
OFFICE ADMIN with any Degree Preferably B.Com with Good Communication Skills & Computer Knowledge.
Walk-in Interview on Saturday at 9:00 am
JANANI VIDYA MANDIRA
3rd Block, Sir M V Layout, Ullal Road,Bengaluru-110
Call: 7337774350 9449832935

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General

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PERSONAL

Change of Name

I, LINGARAJU. A. S/o.Late. Andanaiah R/a.#04, Mallenahalli Village Gutthalahunase Maralavadi Hobli Ramanagar Dist.562121. Declare that ANDANAIAH, ANDANAPPA and ANDANIGOWDA all`Names are one`and the same person,which represents my Father's Name. Vide`affidavit dated:1.9.2025 before Notary G.R.Rajanna Bangalore.

I, AFIFA TAZMEEN MOHAMMED JAVED SHAIKH R/@. #10, 10th Cross, Vasanthnagar, Bangalore-560001, have changed my name to AFIFA TAZMEEN SHAIKH vide affidavit dated 06/09/2025, before notary Meer Hassan Bangalore.

I, SHIMMANTH ARJUN SHIVAKUMAR have changed my name to SHIMANTH ARJUN DODDAMANE SHIVAKUMAR vide affidavit dated: 6/9/2025 Before Notary Manohar Jeerige Bangalore.

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Regularise spl trains linking B'luru to Hubballi & Vijayapura: MP

BENGALURU, DHNS: Bangalore South MP Tejasvi Surya has urged the Railway minister to regularise two special trains connecting the city to Hubballi and Vijayapura.

Surya said trains — 06545/46 Yeshwantpur–Vijayapura Special Express and 07339/40 Hubballi–Bengaluru Overnight Special — should be run as permanent express services.

In a letter to Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, he noted that special train services have been introduced across Karnataka over the past several years to meet the growing passenger demand between Bengaluru and key districts of North Karnataka.

Two such trains have now emerged as lifelines for regulars, labourers and working class, he said in the letter.

Land acquisition hurdles stall railway, national highway projects

State govt has failed to release its share of funds

SHRINIDHI R
DHARWAD, DHNS

A direct railway line between Dharwad and Belagavi, which could drastically cut travel time between the two cities, has been languishing for four decades.

In 2019, the Centre approved the 73-km line running parallel to the national highway, but after six years, the project is yet to take off due to hurdles in acquiring 533 hectares of land.

"Had this project been implemented, travel time between two cities would have been cut to just one hour against the present three hours," said activist Ashok Chandargi.

The important 227-km Belagavi–Hungund–Raichur (NH-745) project, worth Rs 6,629 crore, too has been moving at a snail's pace after farmers objected to land acquisition.

A series of railway and national highway projects announced by the Centre have run into hurdles in Karnataka due to land acquisition issues, as the state government has failed to release its share of funds to expedite land acquisition.

Union Minister Pralhad Joshi to *DH* that the state government is going slow on some mega infrastructure projects, particularly those implemented in partnership with the Centre. After consultations with land owners and meetings with the state government, land for only 33 km in Belagavi district has been acquired for the Dharwad-Belagavi line. Dharwad District In-charge Minister Santosh Lad has sought a realignment of the line. But railways say it is not feasible. The project is now stalled, he added.

According to officials from the NHAI and South Western Railway (SWR), 27 national highway projects and five railway projects remain stalled due to pending land acquisition.

The construction of the bypass to NH-150 in Yadgir is lagging. The state was required to provide Rs 39.23 crore, but has released only Rs 9.41 crore, delaying the project.

For the Maski and Sindhanur bypass, the state has released just Rs 14 crore as compensation for lands acquired against the Rs 66.40 crore required.

In Chintamani, while 215 farmers have been compensated with Rs 123 crore, another 210 farmers are awaiting compensation of Rs 112.50 crore, which has stalled the NH-69 bypass project.

For the Kukanoor–Yalaburga–Gajendragad NH-367 project, Rs 45.05 crore is required, but only Rs 11 crore has been released.

Though the state government succeeded in acquiring land for the Hassan–Maranahalli (NH-75) project, work has not started as land has not been handed over to NHAI.

In Shivamogga and Tumakuru, farmers have demanded more compensation for land.

PWD Principal Secretary Amlan Aditya Biswas denied that land acquisition has been stalled due to a funds crunch. He told *DH* that land losers seek enhancement or simply refuse to take the compensation and prevent entry into land earmarked for acquisition. The scenario is no different for railway projects announced three years ago.

Engineers' Day: Mysuru institute to attempt world record

MYSURU, DHNS: A Mysuru-based engineering institution is all set to create a unique world record on Engineers Day this year. Maharaja Institute of Technology Mysore (MITM) will create an 86,111 square feet portrait of Sir M Visvesvaraya, using sustainable building materials.

According to a press note from S Murali, principal, MITM, the Department of Civil Engineering, in association with Bengaluru-based SAI CAD Institute, will attempt a world record in five different categories.

Sir M Visvesvaraya

"As a tribute to Bharat Ratna Sir M Visvesvaraya, on his 164th birth anniversary, celebrated as Engineers' Day on September 15, a gigantic portrait measuring 80X100 metres (covering 8,000 square metres or 86,111 square feet) will be created at the sports grounds of MITM. This is a first of its kind attempt in India. It will be a tribute to the legendary engineer and administrator of the erstwhile Mysore state," Murali said.

A M Aniruddha, administrative officer of MITM, said, "This initiative is being carried out with the participation of the students and faculty of the Civil Engineering department, supported by volunteers from SAI CAD Institute.

The portrait will be made using manufactured sand (M-Sand), 40 mm down-graded coarse aggregates, nylon thread, harmless colours, and soil. "The use of these materials reflects not only technical innovation, but also an emphasis on sustainability and environmental responsibility," he said.

He added, "This project has been initiated and guided by president of Maharaja Education Trust (MET) B G Naresh Kumar, founder president of MET and principal of MITM S Murali, professor and head of Civil Engineering department C Ramakrishnegowda, and proprietor of SAI CAD Institute M Manjunatha Reddy."

15% NRI quota in med colleges with enhanced seats: Minister

BENGALURU, DHNS: State-run medical colleges where seats have been enhanced will have a 15% NRI quota, Medical Education Minister Dr Sharan Prakash Patil said on Saturday.

Addressing a news conference, he said the National Medical Commission (NMC) had sanctioned an additional 400 seats across eight government-run medical colleges.

"Among the newly-sanctioned 400 seats, 15% is earmarked as NRI quota. The fee fixed is Rs 25 lakh per seat," the minster said. "This will help government medical colleges become financially more self-reliant rather than depending heavily on state grants," he said.

Government medical colleges in Bengaluru, Mysuru, Belagavi, Kalaburagi, Chikkaballapur, Hassan, Raichur and Vijayanagar have each received 50 additional seats.

Karnataka now has 9,663 medical seats in total, Patil said. "The number of students aspiring for medical education is rising every year. Many meritorious students are unable to afford the high fees in private colleges. Hence, we appealed for more seats, and I'm glad our request was approved," the minister said.

He announced that the government would host the Bengaluru Skill Summit, on the lines of Bengaluru Tech Summit on November 4-6.

Traffic fines on state BJP president's car

BENGALURU, DHNS: The car used by state BJP president B Y Vijayendra was found violating traffic rules at least 10 times by the Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS) installed at junctions.

Cases have been registered against the car (KA03 MY 4545) for violations that include travelling without wearing a seatbelt, speeding, jumping the signal and crossing through zebra crossings. Based on a 50% discount, a fine of Rs 3,250 was levied. Fines pending since 2020 have now been paid.

HC dismisses appeal seeking compensation for land acquired in 1971

AMBARISH B
BENGALURU, DHNS

Provisions of Section 24(2) of the of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (Right to Fair Compensation Act), cannot be applied once the acquisition of the subject land is complete and the same vested with the state, according to the High Court of Karnataka.

A division bench, comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice C M Joshi, ruled this while dismissing a writ appeal for the grant of compensation for around 2,600 square feet of land in Kodihalli, Bengaluru East taluk, acquired by the BDA's predecessor in 1971.

The issue pertains to the acquisition of land under the erstwhile City of Bangalore Improvement Act in 1971. Land measuring 1.26 guntas in survey number 15/1B was a part of the acquisition for public purpose. After the possession of the entire land, 1.26 acres were handed over to the engineering section for formation of a layout.

The appellant, M Rajappa, submitted that he was still in possession of the piece of land (six guntas) while seeking a restraining order against the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA).

He moved the division bench after a single bench dismissed his petition. He claimed that six guntas land was in the possession of one Chikka Abbaiah and at present he is in possession. He urged the court to declare as lapsed the acquisition proceedings in respect of the six guntas.

On the other hand, the BDA submitted documents, stating that way back in 1972, the award was passed in respect of the entire 1.26 acres of land, including the six guntas and the possession too was taken and handed over.

The division bench noted that one K Vasudevaiah, the subsequent purchaser of the subject land, had taken compensation in respect of 1.20 acres of land as he could show documents only in respect of 1.20 acres, while an amount of Rs 1,725 was kept by the Treasury of the BDA towards the six guntas.

◆ WEATHER ◆

Overview: Rainfall occurred at few places over North Interior and at most places over Coastal Karnataka and South Interior Karnataka
Forecast Sept 07: Rainfall to occur at many places over the state.

INTERIOR NORTH			
Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Belagavi	27.4	19	TR
Bidar	30	20.4	00
Vijayapura	30.2	21	00
Dharwad	28.6	19.4	00
Haveri	27.6	21.2	00
Kalaburagi	31.6	21.8	00
Raichur	32	21.6	03
COASTAL			
Honnavar	29.1	23.5	15.7
Karwar	31	24	22
Shirali	NA	NA	NA
Mangaluru	30.1	23.9	5.8

INTERIOR SOUTH			
Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Agumbe	NA	NA	21.5
Bengaluru	27.4	20.4	00
Ballari	NA	NA	NA
Chamarajanagar	29.1	19.8	00
Chikkamagaluru	NA	NA	NA
Chitradurga	28.9	20.2	00
Davangere	30	20.5	00
Hassan	27.3	19.9	00
Mysuru	29	19.8	00
Madikeri	NA	NA	NA
Kolar	30.1	19.8	00
OTHER STATIONS			
New Delhi	33.2	25	0.1
Kolkata	34.6	27.6	00
Mumbai	35.4	25.9	01
Chennai	35.4	26	00
Pune	27.8	21.4	0.2
Hyderabad	30.8	22.7	00
Th'puram	32.6	24.2	00

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KARNATAKA HOUSING BOARD
3rd Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, Bengaluru.

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal)

Karnataka Housing Board invite tender from empanelled contractors in KHB and also willing to empanel through Karnataka public procurement portal for below mentioned work.

Sl. No.	Name of Work
1.	**Construction of 2nd Floor Duplex 100 houses (Surya Nisarga Valley) with Amenities like Commercial complex, Club House & other allied works at Block-9 of Suryanagara Phase-4, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru Urban District.** Tender Reference Number No.:KHB/2025-26/BD/work indent 644 & IFT No. 84/2025-26 Date: 04-09-2025. **Amount put to tender Rs.89,56,08,058/-.** Last date for submission of bid: **20.09.2025 upto 4.00 p.m.**

For further information, contact below mentioned office address: **Executive Engineer, Karnataka Housing Board, Cauvery Bhavan, Bengaluru, Telephone No.080-22273511 / 080-22100077 Website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**
Sd/- Executive Engineer,
DIPR/CP/AAPL/RO2671/25-26 Karnataka Housing Board, Bengaluru.

KARNATAKA POWER CORPORATION LIMITED
CIN : U85110KA1970SGC001919
TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tenders are invited through **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** for the following works:

SHARAVATHY HYDRO ELECTRIC PROJECT

(1) KPCL/2025-26/PM/WORK_INDENT3313, Dt: 29.08.2025. Replacement of two nos. very old 110KW/150HP capacity standby cooling water pump along with motors at SGS. EMD: **Rs. 50,000/-. (2)** KPCL/2025-26/PM/WORK_INDENT3371, Dt: 01.09.2025. Supply, Installation, testing, commissioning, replacement and retrofitting of 4 nos. new Soft starters for exisitng old star delta starter panels of 25HP Governor oil pump motors of SGS. EMD: **Rs. 12,000/-.** Last date for submission of tender for Sl.No. 1 : **12.09.2025 up to 16.30 Hrs** and for Sl.No. 2: **15.09.2025 up to 16.30 Hrs.** Further information can be had from **Executive Engineer(Turbine)JOG,** KPCL, Jogfalls-577435, Sagar Tq., Shivamogga Dist. M: 9449598802.

KALINADI HYDRO ELECTRIC PROJECT

(1) KPCL/2025-26/GH/WORK_INDENT3109/CALL-2, Dt: 02.09.2025. AMC of various Hydro-mechanical equipment of KHEP Stage-I & II. Tender amount: **Rs. 21,03,494.90.** EMD: **Rs. 50,000/-. (2)** KPCL/2025-26/PS/WORK_INDENT3402, Dt: 29.08.2025. Comprehensive AMC of CCTV systems installed at KPCL Ganeshgudi. EMD: **Rs. 10,500/-.** Last date for receipt of tender: **10.09.2025, 17.00 Hrs** for Sl.No. (1) & **15.09.2025 up to 16.00 Hrs** for Sl.No. (2). Further information can be had from **Executive Engineer(Gates)Kali,** Kadra, KPCL, Karwar Tq., North Kanara-581396, M: 9141611350 , E-mail: eegateskali@gmail.com **for Sl.No. (1)** & **Superintending Enginner (Electrical) Supa,** KPCL, Ganeshgudi-581365, Joida Tq., Uttara Kannada Dist, M: 9449598804 **for Sl.No. (2).**

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited
(A Joint Venture of GoI & GoK)
e-Mail: contactus@bmrc.co.in Website: www.bmrc.co.in

PUBLIC NOTICE

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) proposes to undertake the Phase-3 Metro & Double Decker Project comprising Corridor-I: J.P.Nagar 4th Phase to Kempapura Cross Metro Station Corridor-II: Hosahalli to Kadabagere Cross Metro Station

As part of environmental planning process, **2nd environmental stakeholder** meetings have been scheduled to obtain the remarks and inputs from the stakeholders on the potential Environmental Impacts associated with the construction and operation of the metro in the corridors mentioned below.

The proposed venues and timings for these consultations have been published in accordance with regulatory requirements. All concerned citizens, environmental experts, stakeholders, and other interested parties of the public are invited to attend and actively participate in these discussions.

Your opinions, suggestions, and feedback on the environmental implications of the proposed project are highly valued and will contribute to responsible and sustainable project implementation.

Sl.No.	Venue	Date	Time
1	**GNR Kalyana Mantapa,** 18th Main Road, 4th T Block, Marenahalli, Jayanagar, Bengaluru-560069.	13.09.2025	10.30 AM
2	**Regional Institute of Co-operative Management, Bengaluru.** 67, Near Devegowda Petrol Bunk, Gururaja Layout, Padmanabhanagar, Bengaluru-560070	13.09.2025	2.30 PM
3	**Anu's party hall, Vijaya Palace,** 4th Floor, 2nd stage 2nd Block, opp: BDA Complex Nagarabhavi, Bengaluru- 560072	14.09.2025	10.30 AM
4	**Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd., Head office,** Conference Hall, 3rd floor, Corporate Office, BMTC Complex, K.H.Road, Shanthinagar, Bengaluru-560027.	16.09.2025	10.30 AM
5	**Urban Zilla Panchayath Office,** 515, Kanakapura Main Road, Chandra Layout, Umarbagh Layout, Banashankari Temple Ward, Bengaluru -560070.	17.09.2025	10.30 AM

Sd/- General Manager (Land), BMRCL

Karnataka State Police Housing and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
#59, Richmond Road, (Gen. K S Thimmaiah Road) Bengaluru-25
Phone: 080-25584102/25594893
e-Mail: eecontractksphc@gmail.com | Website: www.ksphc.org
No.EE/KSPH&IDCL/CNT/TND/04/2025-26/151 Dated: 04.09.2025

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER

KSPH & IDCL invites online tender as per KTPP 2000 Act & as per Standard Tender Document through KPPP **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** for the below work:

Supply of Diesel/Petrol-Luxury/Semi Luxury A/C Cars (Swift Dezire/Toyota Ethios or Equivalent) and Diesel / Petrol Non AC Cars (Indica. Equivalent along with drivers, Fuel and consumables to corporate office, division and Sub division Office at Bengaluru. (Total 12 Vehicles)

Amt. Put to Tender: Rs.55.20 Lakhs (Excl. GST)

Interested eligible Vehicle Suppliers may participate in the Tendering Process. The details such as Tender fee, EMD, Tender documents etc., are available on KPP Portal from 08.09.2025 onwards.

"KSPH & IDCL reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender without assigning any reasons."

Note: Henceforth any changes / modifications in the tender will be updated only on KPPP.

Sd/-
DIPR/CP/2657/CCL/2025-26 **Executive Engineer-Contracts**

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN : U40109KA1999SGC025521)
No.: CEE/BGKT/Tr(Op)Z/SEE(O)/AEE-2/25-26/8856-62 Date: 04.09.2025

SHORT-TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPPP mode only)

KPTCL invites tender on Electronic mode for the following work on Partial Turnkey basis. **Bid Enquiry No.:** KPTCL/CEE/TRNS/BGKT/110KV/STN37/25-26/SUVARNA SOUDHA **Tender No.:** KPTCL/2025-26/SS/WORK_INDENT2621. **Name of the work:** Creating 33kV reference by providing 1x20MVA, 110/33kV Power Transformer & construction of 1 no. of 33kV Terminal Bay at **110kV Suvarna Soudha Sub-station Belagavi Taluk & District arranging additional power supply to an extent of 2700kVA (Totalling to 3200kVA on 33kV) to the existing HT installation having CD of 500kVA on 11kV bearing** RR No. HT-207 bearing in favour of Airport Director, Airport Authority of India, **Sambra Village in Belagavi Taluk & District, including supply of equipments/materials, erection, civil works, testing and commissioning on Partial Turn Key Basis.**

The tenders will be receive through E-procurement portal only. The details regarding participation in the E-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** on hyperlink "E Procurement KPTCL" or to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in on or after 16.30 hrs. of 08.09.2025.** Any other details can be had from the office of the undersigned during office hours.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (Elec.), Transmission (Operations) Zone, KPTCL, 110kV Sub-Station Premises, Navanagara, Bagalkote-587103.

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited
(A Joint Venture of GoI & GoK)
e-mail: pdadvt@bmrc.co.in **Website:** www.bmrc.co.in **Ph:** 080-22969274, 22969280
Date: 06.09.2025

RFP NOTIFICATION

On behalf of the Managing Director, BMRCL invites open e-tenders from eligible applicants, who fulfill the prescribed eligibility cum qualification criteria (EQC) for the following Outdoor Advertisements in BMRCL Network;

Sl. No.	Tender Name	RFP Notification	Bid Security	Date for submission of Bids	Date & Time of Opening of Bids
1	Request for Proposal for Grant of Concession to Design, Develop, Operate, and Maintain Advertisement Panels on Selected Piers & Portals from Whitefield to Challaghatta Metro Station on Purple Line.	BMRCL/PD/ ADVT/PIERS & PORTALS/ 2025-26/01 Dated: 07.09.2025	INR 29 Lakhs	08.09.2025 to 08.10.2025	10.10.2025 at 11.00 Hrs
2	Request for Proposal for Grant of Concession to Design, Develop, Operate, and Maintain Advertisement Panels on Selected Piers & Portals from Bommasandra to R V Road Metro Station on Yellow Line.	BMRCL/PD/ ADVT/PIERS & PORTALS/ 2025-26/02 Dated: 07.09.2025	INR 15.50 Lakhs	08.09.2025 to 08.10.2025	10.10.2025 at 12.00 Hrs
3	Request for Proposal for Grant of Concession to Design, Develop, Operate, and Maintain Advertisement Panels on Selected Piers & Portals from Madavara to Silk Institute Metro Station on Green Line.	BMRCL/PD/ ADVT/PIERS & PORTALS/ 2025-26/03 Dated: 07.09.2025	INR 18.50 Lakhs	08.09.2025 to 08.10.2025	10.10.2025 at 13.00 Hrs
4	Request for Proposal for Grant of Concession to Design, Develop, Operate, and Maintain Advertisement Panels on Selected Piers & Portals from Kalena Agrahara to Tavarekere Metro Station on Pink Line.	BMRCL/PD/ ADVT/PIERS & PORTALS/ 2025-26/04 Dated: 07.09.2025	INR 07 Lakhs	08.09.2025 to 08.10.2025	10.10.2025 at 14.00 Hrs
5	Request for Proposal for Grant of Concession to Design, Develop, Operate, and Maintain Advertisement Panels on Selected Piers & Portals from Silk Board to KIA Terminal Metro Station on Blue Line.	BMRCL/PD/ ADVT/PIERS & PORTALS/ 2025-26/05 Dated: 07.09.2025	INR 30 Lakhs	08.09.2025 to 08.10.2025	10.10.2025 at 15.00 Hrs

For more details, visit our e-tendering portal: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.infrom 08.09.2025 onwards.** The Request for Proposal (RFP) will also be available in our website: **www.bmrc.co.in**.

Sd/- Director (Finance)

Include trans kids in Juvenile Justice Act, Centre told

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has asked the central government to review the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, to incorporate provisions inclusive of transgender children.

The rights body found various gaps in a survey to assess the living conditions in Garima Grehs — shelters for transgender people — and recommended a framework for transgender welfare that guides policymakers, civil society, and stakeholders.

The Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment set up these shelters to provide transgender persons with basic amenities like shelter, food, medical care, and recreational facilities.

It launched the initiative as a pilot programme with 12 shelters across nine states and UTs, and continued it under the Central scheme SMILE.

The rights body, in its report, also asked that transgender children be notified under the disadvantaged group under Section 1(d) of the Right to Education Act. The NHRC has also asked the government to carry out a comprehensive survey to assess the prevalence of gender-nonconforming children being disowned by their families.

The NHRC, during its visits for the survey, found that there were significant delays in fund disbursement.

"On average, shelters reported a delay of 15 months in receiving funds. The current reimbursement-based funding model places a considerable burden on organisations, forcing them to self-finance operations while awaiting reimbursement," said the report. The NHRC recommended increasing the rent rates to align with market conditions.

The NHRC also found that various states had differing attitudes towards transgender children. For instance, district administrations in Maharashtra were supportive and helped residents obtain certificates with fewer obstacles.

However, residents in Delhi reported facing significant challenges due to bureaucratic insensitivity and procedural hurdles.

In Bihar, the authorities allowed transgender persons to mention the Garima Greh's address and issued transgender certificates.

In Gujarat, however, the certificate had to be issued as per the address mentioned in the Aadhaar Card.

The NHRC also found from surveys from states like Tamil Nadu and Kerala that families would abandon kids who joined "hijra" communities.

These children should be in childcare institutions, but remained outside of the ambit of the law because the Juvenile Justice Act was silent on gender-nonconforming children.

Education for these children, too, was a tough spot since the RTE Act overlooked gender-nonconforming children.

Law should uphold dignity, not just rules: Justice Nagarathna

'Constitution is not just a legal document; it is a charter of societal transformation'

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Senior Supreme Court judge Justice B V Nagarathna on Saturday said law is not just about rules but about ensuring that every person, regardless of wealth, status, caste, gender, or belief, is treated as an equal subject before the law.

She said the law is seen as a fortress accessible only to the powerful, but lawyers can change this by becoming a "bridge between rights and remedies".

Justice B V Nagarathna

Speaking at the 12th convocation of National Law University, in the national capital, Justice Nagarathna said the Constitution is not just a legal document; it is a charter of societal transformation.

She emphasised that if the rule of law has to be preserved as the essence of democracy, it is the duty of the courts to enforce the same without fear or favour, affection or ill will.

She said the rule of law, being one of the most significant characteristics of good governance, prevails because India has an independent judiciary, which has been sustained, amongst others, because of support from an independent bar.

"The Constitution entrusts you not with the mere defence of rules, but with the defence of purpose, one rooted in equality, liberty, and justice. If you hold fast to this, you will not just be lawyers but will be custodians of India's unfinished and ongoing project of transformation," she said, addressing the students.

Justice Nagarathna said in a democracy where the rule of law is its essence, it has to be preserved and enforced, particularly by courts of law.

She also said the law is not just about rules, but it is about purpose and creating conditions in which human dignity can flourish.

"It is about ensuring that every person—regardless of wealth, status, caste, gender, or belief—is treated as an equal subject before the law. In societies like ours, where historical exclusions and entrenched inequalities persist, the legal profession is not just a vocation—it is a vehicle for transformation," she said.

Theaterisation to come, have to see how long it takes: Army chief

NEW DELHI, PTI: Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi on Friday asserted that theaterisation — or the integration of Army, Air Force and Navy capabilities — will definitely take place, and the question is only about how long it would take to materialise.

If one has to deal with multiple agencies, "theaterisation is the answer", he said.

Dwivedi made the remarks while interacting with the media after launching a book titled 'Operation Sindoor: The Untold Story of India's Deep Strikes Inside Pakistan' at Manekshaw Centre here.

He was asked about his stand on theaterisation, after divergent views emerged recently on the move planned. "Theaterisation will come, today or tomorrow. We just have to see how long it will take. We have to go through certain steps to bring in theaterisation, which includes jointness, integration. A lot of things need to be discussed over for that," the Army chief said.

Terming theaterisation as necessary, he said that unity of command is more important in times of battle in which multiple agencies are involved.

After EU leaders, PM Modi speaks to France's Macron

Updates Modi on Europe's post-war troop pledge for Ukraine

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday received a call from French President Emmanuel Macron, who briefed him about the pledge of the 26 nations in Europe to send troops to Ukraine to guarantee security of the Eastern European nation after the end of its conflict with Russia.

"I just spoke with Prime Minister @NarendraModi. I presented him the outcome of the work we carried out with President Zelensky and our partners of the Coalition of the Willing last Thursday in Paris," President Macron posted on X after speaking to Modi, who had also received a call from the European Union leaders, Ursula von der Leyen and Antonio Costa.

"Exchanged views on international and regional issues, including efforts for bringing an early end to the conflict in Ukraine," Modi posted on X.

The leaders of Europe and Ukrainian President Zelenskyy had held a meeting of the 'Coalition of the Willing' in Paris on September 4 to discuss ways to step up pressure on Russia for cessation of hostilities.

Macron had said after the meeting that US support for the "reassurance force" would be finalised "in coming days" and that the US would work with the countries in Europe in imposing new sanctions on Russia if the former Soviet Union nation continued to stall a deal to end conflict.

French President Emmanuel Macron and PM Narendra Modi in Paris. AFP FILE

"They exchanged views on recent efforts towards bringing an end to the conflict in Ukraine. PM Modi reiterated India's consistent support for the peaceful resolution of the conflict and early restoration of peace and stability," a spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs stated after the phone call between Modi and Macron.

Modi also thanked Macron for accepting the invitation to the AI Impact Summit to be hosted by India in February and that he looked forward to welcoming the French president.

It said the two leaders reviewed and positively assessed the developments in bilateral cooperation across different sectors.

"The leaders also reaffirmed their commitment towards further strengthening of the India-France strategic partnership, in line with the Horizon 2047 Roadmap, the Indo-Pacific roadmap and the defence industrial roadmap," an Indian readout noted.

Beautification works underway in view of PM's likely visit to Manipur

IMPHAL/CHURACHANDPUR, PTI: A grand stage is being erected at Kangla Fort in Manipur's Imphal, while cleaning and painting activities are underway in the area in view of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's likely visit to the state next week, officials said on Saturday.

They remained tight-lipped over the objective of the construction and cleaning works at the fort, but said that instructions had been given to complete these tasks at the earliest.

The PM is likely to visit Manipur on September 13, which will be his first tour to the state since ethnic violence broke out between Meiteis and Kukis.

"A grand stage is under construction at Kangla Fort in Imphal. Arrangements are being made to accommodate more than 15,000 people in front of the stage. Cleaning and painting activities inside the fort are also going on," an official said.

Kangla Fort serves as the traditional seat of power of the former Manipuri rulers.

Road medians on a 7 km stretch between Imphal airport and Kangla Fort are also being repainted and trees trimmed.

Similar works are underway in the Churachandpur district headquarters.

Workshop for BJP MPs from today

NEW DELHI, PTI: A two-day "karyashala" (workshop) of BJP MPs will begin on Sunday at the Parliament complex where Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to be felicitated for the GST reforms.

While the workshop was planned several days ago, sources said Modi may now participate as well.

However, a dinner BJP president J P Nadda was to host for party MPs on Saturday was called off as an expression of solidarity with the victims of floods in large parts of north India.

Modi was scheduled to host a dinner for the BJP-led NDA MPs on Monday on the eve of the vice-presidential election, but it is also likely to be cancelled, sources said.

The BJP-led NDA's candidate C P Radhakrishnan and the Opposition's nominee B Sudarshan Reddy, a former Supreme Court judge, are locked in a straight contest, with numbers clearly favouring the Maharashtra governor.

At the gathering of BJP MPs in the workshop, sources said, the PM is likely to be felicitated by the MPs for the announcement of the new GST slabs which the government has asserted will reduce the tax burden on people and boost economy.

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PROVISION OF PORCELAIN INSULATORS

E-TENDER NOTICE NO.: EL_TRD_34_25-26; Dated: 01-09-2025. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work: Tender No: EL_TRD_34_25-26; Name of work: Provision of porcelain insulators in view of safety and reliability of traction power system under the jurisdiction of DEE/TRD/Katihar. Tender Value: ₹3,74,70,250.50; Earnest Money: ₹3,37,400.00. E-tender will be closed at 15:00 hrs. on 23-09-2025 and Opened at 15:30 hrs. on 23-09-2025. The complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available upto 15.00 hrs. of 23-09-2025 in website www.ireps.gov.in.

Sr. DEE/TRD & GS/Katihar

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY "Serving Customers with a smile"

ELECTRICAL TRD WORK IN KATIHAR DIVISION

Tender Notice No.: EL_TRD_ 32_25-26; Dated: 01-09-2025; E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work; Tender No.: EL_TRD_32_25-26; Name of Work : Electrical TRD work inconnection with Connectivity of two unconnected lines from both ends with El-system of interlocking at Barsoi. Tender value: ₹2,17,55,663.64/-; Earnest Money: ₹2,58,800/-; Date & time of closing of tender at 15:00 hrs. and opening at 15:30 hrs. on 24-09-2025. For complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available upto 15:00 hrs. on 24-09-2025 in the website www.ireps.gov.in

Sr. DEE/TRD, Katihar

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WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY

MATERIAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

('E'-TENDER NOTICE FOR THE SUPPLY OF STORES, NO. EPS/95/2025)

PCMM/WCR on behalf of the President of India invites the following advertised tenders through E-procurement System. Manual/postal offers shall not be entertained. Tenders can be accessed under the link https://ireps.gov.in for details and for submission of Tender.

Sr.No.	Tender No.	Short Description	Tendered Qty
1	81255767	Switch Expansion Joint for long welded Rail	40 Set.
2	20254020A	SET OF SINGLE DUCT LEATHER BELLOWS	340 Set.
3	20254294	ZINC CROMATED (DIPPING PROCESS) OIL COOLER RADIATOR	24 Set.
4	20255020	IGBT BASED 3-PHASE DRIVE PROPULSION EQUIPMENTS.	47 Set.
5	10254529	Element Engine air filter	1135 Nos.
6	40252661A	25 KW, 110/130V DC BRUSHLESS ALTERNATOR	31 Nos.
7	30251502	High Tensile tight lock Centre buffer coupler	899 Set.

Due Date for Sr. no.1: 24.09.2025, Sr. no. 2, 3, 4: 25.09.2025, Sr. no. 5: 30.09.2025, Sr. no. 6,7: 06.10.2025. For tenders with estimated value below ₹ 50 Lakh, interested firms are advised to visit www.ireps.gov.in (SD.)

For Principal Chief Material Manager, WCR, Jabalpur

स्वच्छ भारत अभियान एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

Salem Division

E-Tender Notice No. SA-TRD-2025-26-151 dated 04.09.2025

Sr.Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction and Distribution branch/ Salem Division, Salem 5 for and on behalf of the President of India Invites ONLINE tenders for the following works as per tender notice given in our e-tender portal www.ireps.gov.in. The Tenderer(s)/Contractor(s) intending to apply for e-tender for works in Salem Division, need to get enrolled in the e-tender portal www.ireps.gov.in and only online tender will be accepted. It is the responsibility of Tenderer(s)/Contractor(s) to obtain Digital Signature certificates for participating e-tendering.

Sl. No.	Tender No.	Name of work	Appx. Value of the work (₹ in lakh)	Cost of tender form ₹	Amount of EMD ₹	Completion period of work
1	SA-TRD-2025-26-151	SA Division: Modification to OHE in connection with Provision of additional High Level Single Face PF for Rd. 6 and Relaxing the PSR of 30 Kmph to 60 Kmph in Coimbatore North Junction	113.36	0	206700	4 months

Sl.No. 1: Tender closing date and time: 06.10.2025 at 14.30 Hrs.

Complete details of the above tenders are given on the e-portal "www.ireps.gov.in". For Details of bid submission, please refer website portal "www.ireps.gov.in". The online bids for tenders floated through the above portal are required to be digitally signed.

Sr.Divisional Electrical Engineer, Traction Distribution, Salem.

सत्यमेव जयते

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT

announces

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SCOPE
- All recognised courses from class XI onwards
- Applications are accepted and verified by the State Government /Union Territory
- Coverage of the poorest households

ENTITLEMENT
- Compulsory non-refundable fees (including tuition fee)
- Academic allowance ranging from Rs. 2500 to Rs. 13500 per annum
- 10% extra allowance for Divyang (specially abled) students

- Student should have a valid Mobile Number, Aadhaar Number (UID), Aadhaar seeded Bank Account, Income Certificate, Previous year Marksheet and Caste Certificate.
- Scheme guidelines and detailed eligibility criteria available on below mentioned link:

https://socialjustice.gov.in/schemes/25

Scan QR Code for Scheme Guidelines

CBC 38101/11/0019/2526

'Nude gang' triggers panic in Meerut villages

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

They emerge from the fields completely naked, try to pull women into the fields, and compel them into submission. In the Daurala region of Meerut district in Uttar Pradesh, 'Nude gang' has instilled fear among the villagers, who claim that at least four similar incidents occurred within the past few days.

The youths with long hair suddenly appear naked from the crop-covered fields and attack unsuspecting women who happen to be passing by ... they try to drag the m into the fields and physically assault them," said a resident of Daurala

He said that two days ago, a woman on her way to work was attacked by two youths near Bharala village. "The woman, however, put up strong resistance and shouted for help....The residents surrounded the field and looked for the attackers, but they had managed to escape," he said.

The residents said that it was the fourth such incident. The earlier incidents were not reported by victims out of "shame".

Bharala village Pradhan Rajendra Kumar said that the women now avoid stepping out of their homes. "There is panic among the villagers," he added.

According to reports, police have launched a massive search operation in the village and the nearby areas and even used drones for surveillance, but could not find any trace of the gang members.

Reports said that CCTVs were now being installed and women constables were being deployed in the village to instil confidence among the people and catch the 'culprits.'

The police, however, think that there was no such gang and that it could be the handiwork of anti-social elements to 'tarnish' the image of the police and the administration.

Maha cops bust drug syndicate in Telangana; 12 arrested

MUMBAI, DHNS: In a major drug bust, the Maharashtra police dismantled a massive drug manufacturing syndicate operating in Telangana with the arrest of 12 persons and seizure of raw material to the tune of Rs 12,000 crore in the international market.

The operation was carried out by the Anti-Narcotics Cell of the Mira Bhayander-Vasai Virar police, which has jurisdiction spread across parts of the twin districts of Thane and Palghar.

It is estimated that hundreds of kilos of the mephedrone drug have been manufactured and supplied in the market in Mumbai over the years. Mephedrone, which goes by various names, including drone, M-CAT, white magic, and meow meow, is a synthetic stimulant drug belonging to the amphetamine and cathinone classes and is in very high demand.

The investigations had started on August 8 when the Crime Branch arrested a Bangladeshi woman, Fatima Murad Sheikh alias Mollah (23), with 105 gms of MD and 23.97 lakh cash near Kashimira bus stop in Mira Road, a suburb of Mumbai.

The investigations led police to this unit in an industrial area in Cherlapally near Telangana's Hyderabad, where 5.7 kg of MD, 35,500 litres of chemicals, and 950 kg of powder were seized.

The facility was functioning under guise of a chemical factory. "We carried out the operation for over one month," said MBVV Police Commissioner Niket Kaushik.

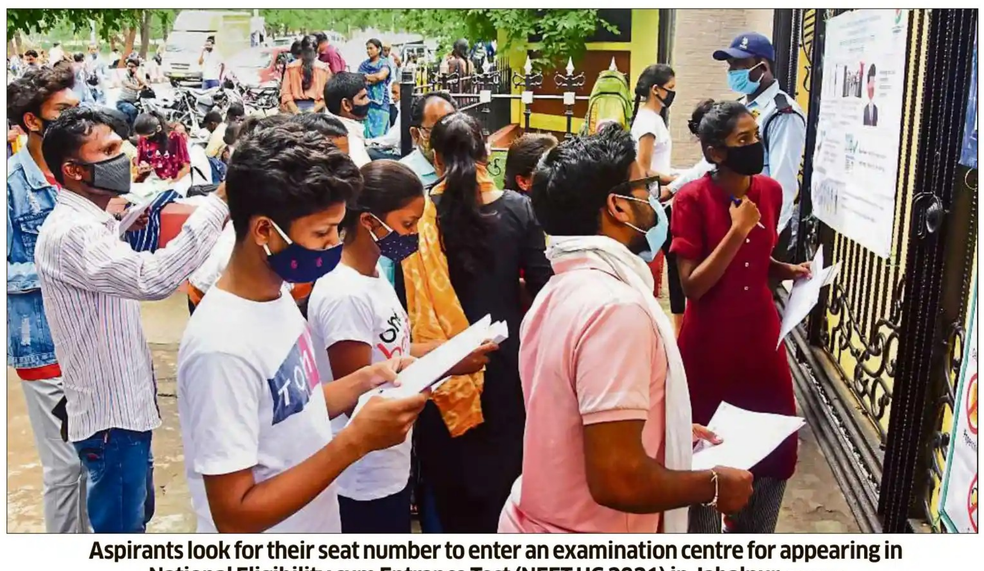
According to him, there could be international ramifications of the case. "We have already arrested a foreign national," he said.

BIG PUSH

Quotas helped in public education, but private HEIs widen gap

Private colleges: The next reservation frontier

REHNAMOL RAVEENDRAN



Aspirants look for their seat number to enter an examination centre for appearing in National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET UG 2021) in Jabalpur. PTI FILE

In the southern corner of the country, on the outskirts of Thiruvananthapuram, a government-run school has preserved a partially burned wooden bench for posterity. Though lacking the aesthetics of a 21st-century private school furniture, the humble bench carries with it a tale of revolt and perseverance.

Over a century ago, this school in Ooruttambalam village—then part of the princely state of Travancore — was the flashpoint of an agitation for Dalit education rights. Heralding a new chapter in the struggle of the 'untouchables' against inequality, renowned social reformer Ayyankali, hailing from the Pulaya community, had led Kerala's first agricultural strike in 1914 after the school authorities denied admission to a Dalit girl named Panchami.

As the agitating Dalits — mostly landless agricultural laborers— refused to work in fields, dominant caste groups responded brutally and burnt down the school. The semi-charred bench in the school, renamed in 2022 as the Ayyankali-Panchami Upper Primary School, is the only remaining physical proof of the historic struggle. What encouraged the Dalits to undergo misery and hunger was their belief in the power of education in weeding out inequality.

Several decades before Ayyankali's revolt, the social reformer couple Jyotiba Phule and Savitribai Phule had fought for the education of girls. Similarly, Dr B R Ambedkar, as a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, made the British colonial regime introduce reservations in public services in 1943 and post-matric scholarships in 1944. The scholarship scheme, though in a watered-down form, runs even today.

What Ayyankali, the Phules, and Ambedkar believed was that equitable access to education is the primary right of any human. This was particularly important in India, where access to education was traditionally denied to the 'untouchables', backward classes and women by the caste system intertwined with patriarchy.

While the post-Independence caste-based affirmative action has enabled relatively equitable access to government-run higher education institutions (HEIs), the mushrooming of private HEIs has once again brought the 'access' question to the forefront.

It may be noted that the pre-Independence push for social justice did not transition smoothly after 1947. The first blow was in 1951, when the Supreme Court, in the Champakam Dorairajan case, abolished caste-based reservations in educational institutions, citing a violation of Article 15, which prohibits discrimination. This led to the First Amendment of the Constitution.

A furious Ambedkar was instrumental in drafting Article 15(4), which provides special provisions for "socially and educationally backward classes" such as SCs and STs. However, the backward classes were still not able to access the HEIs, including the IITs and IIMs, which by the 1990s had become the focus of the middle-class.

It wasn't until 2006 that Article 15(5)—introduced via the 93rd Constitutional Amendment—enabled reservations in the Centre's HEIs for backward classes.

By this time, the floodgates of private education had been opened in the country, particularly in high-demand fields such as medicine, engineering, management, and pharmaceuticals. The number of private HEIs increased from 10 to 145 since 2006. According to the India Brand Equity Foundation, under the Department of Commerce, the education sector attracted $9.9 billion in FDI between 2000 and 2024. India's higher education market, valued at $68 billion in 2024, is projected to reach $137 billion by 2033.

It is at this juncture that a recent recommendation of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports—to introduce reservations for SC, ST, and OBC communities in private HEIs—has rekindled a long-standing debate.

The recommendation also revisits the conflict in the TMA Pai judgment of 2002 — in which the Supreme Court granted private institutions autonomy under Article 19 (1) (g), by interpreting the running of education institutions under the definition of business — with Article 15 (5) introduced by the UPA in 2006, which allows a state to impose reservations in private institutions. Notably, no state or central government since 2006 has made any law for such reservations.

It is yet to be seen if any government will come forward to provide reservations in private HEIs. However, taking cues from Ambedkar's idea of post-matric scholarships, an education grant shall be given to SC, ST and OBC students, along with the new category Economically Weaker Sections, if the government plans to open up reservation in private HEIs.

Such a measure would ensure diversity and inclusion in top-tier private HEIs. Since many of these charge hefty fees, the government must be willing to fund the education of deserving candidates.

This would require the government to increase its current allocation of 4% of GDP to education to 6%, a giant leap of adding $83 bn to ensure universal access to all educational institutions for all, by the mandate of Article 15(5).

The struggle of erstwhile reformers for equitable access to education can be taken forward only if the inequality in higher education vis-a-vis private HEIs is addressed.

(Author is an Associate Professor in Jindal Global Law School, OP Jindal Global University, Haryana)

No external push behind GST reform, says Vaishnaw

Says planning for new rates started 1.5 years ago

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Stating that the new Goods and Services Tax (GST) rates had nothing to do with any external issues, Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that the reforms will give a boost to the Indian economy. He said that the tax reforms will kick in during Navratri, the advent of the Indian festive season.

"The coming 22nd, the first day of Navratri, will bring a new happiness for all of us, for all middle-class families and for 140 crore citizens of this country," he said.

The GST reforms, which will bring all products under 5% and 18% slabs, except for those classified under "sin" or "luxury", were announced on Thursday by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman after a GST Council meeting.

In response to a question, Vaishnaw told reporters at the BJP headquarters that the planning for the reforms started a year and a half ago, "before the US elections".

He added that the initiative was taken in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's goal "to reform, perform, and transform".

"This GST reform will start a transformation journey for the country. This 1.5-year-long GST reform exercise has now been finalised. In every step, PM Modi has guided us. External factors have no role to play in this next-generation reform," said the IT and Railways minister, dismissing speculations that the US tariff imposition was behind the announcement.

Vaishnaw said the new GST regime simplified the complex tax system in place before Modi came to power.

He added that along with the income tax relief in Budget 2025-26, the GST rate rationalisation would boost India's economic growth.

"India's current GDP is about Rs 3.3 lakh crore; out of this, Rs 2.02 lakh crore comes from consumption, contributing to the GDP. If our consumption rises by even 10%, we will have Rs 20 lakh crore extra consumption. Consumption has a positive multiplier effect and it creates a virtuous cycle in the economy," he said.

'GST overhaul a people's reform'

NEW DELHI, PTI: Calling the landmark GST overhaul a 'people's reform', Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said that rationalisation of rates for a wide swath of products will benefit every family, boost consumption, and bolster the economy.

In an interview to PTI, the Finance Minister said she will personally monitor passing on of goods and services tax (GST) rate cuts in the form of price reduction but hastened to add that industry has shown positivity towards such cuts.

Within days of the decision, from car makers to public sector insurance companies and shoe and apparel brands have already announced significant price cuts and the rest are likely to follow suit by the time new GST rates are implemented, she said.

National emblem only for govt events: J&K CM over shrine row

ANANTNAG, PTI: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday criticised the use of the national emblem on a renovation plaque by the Waqf Board at Srinagar's Hazratbal shrine, asserting that the symbol is meant for government functions and not religious institutions.

Abdullah, who is touring the flood-affected areas in south Kashmir, said the J&K Waqf Board should apologise for the "mistake" that has hurt religious sentiments.

His comments follow a major row that erupted after the plaque bearing the Ashoka emblem was vandalised by unidentified people.

Voter list overhaul on cards, poll body to meet state CEOs

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

REVISION MEETING

- On September 10, CEOs may brief the EC about the number of voters and last SIR in the states.
- Officials tight-lipped about the timeline for nationwide exercise.

Preparing for a nationwide Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, the Election Commission (EC) is expected to hold a meeting of chief electoral officers (CEOs) of states and Union Territories (UTs) on September 10, where a review of preparedness for the exercise, among other things, will be discussed.

The meeting, described by EC sources as routine, comes close on the heels of the contentious SIR in Bihar.

EC officials are tight-lipped about the possible timeline for the nationwide exercise, despite elections to five states being scheduled for April-May next year.

The EC on June 24 said it had decided to begin the SIR in the entire country and would be starting with Bihar, as the state was going to polls in October-November. It had then said that the schedule for the rest of the country would be announced later.

The EC had reasoned that the SIR was necessary because it was last held in 2003, and that there could be instances of repeated entries in electoral rolls due to rapid urbanisation and frequent migration.

Sources said that at the upcoming meeting, the CEOs were likely to brief the Election Commission about the number of voters and the last SIR in the states, among other things.

The electoral rolls are revised every year through Special Summary Revision (SSR) and before each election. The SIR would mean preparing the electoral rolls afresh.

This time, the EC is unlikely to go for SSR: It has not issued any media statement so far, indicating that the SIR is likely to be announced.

The EC on August 7 last year announced the timeline for the SSR from August 20 to October 18.

Dhinakaran blames state BJP chief for NDA rift; praises Annamalai

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam (AMMK) chief T T V Dhinakaran on Saturday blamed Tamil Nadu BJP president Nainar Nagenthiran's "arrogant attitude" for O Panneerselvam's exit from the NDA.

Dhinakaran

Dhinakaran also accused Nainar of not knowing how to handle alliance partners, a job that his predecessor K Annamalai "handled well".

Dhinakaran, who announced his decision to walk out of the NDA on September 3, reiterated that his party's doors remain open—particularly for the NDA, which he described as their preferred alliance. However, he alleged that AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami was opposed to AMMK's entry into the coalition. He has given the BJP time until December to resolve the issues and bring his party back into the fold.

If the December deadline is not met, Dhinakaran warned that his party would be forced to explore other options—including a possible alliance with actor Vijay's TVK.

His sharp criticism of Nagenthiran came just hours before Palaniswami removed senior leader KA Sengottaiyan from all party posts, a day after Sengottaiyan called for efforts to reunite the AIADMK within ten days.

Dhinakaran's open attack on Nagenthiran is a major setback to the BJP's efforts to build a strong NDA to take on the DMK alliance.

"We all came into NDA due to Annamalai's efforts. As long as Annamalai was the TN BJP chief, he handled us very well. But Nainar is not able to handle allies. OPS left the NDA only because of him... he is a good friend, but he is the reason," Dhinakaran said.

He also termed as "arrogant attitude" Nagenthiran's statement that he could have arranged for OPS to meet PM Modi even after the latter blamed the former for the insult rendered to him. "We thought there would be some resolution in four months, but nothing happened. But I am making it clear that we will be part of the winning alliance."

Sharjeel Imam moves SC against rejection of bail in Delhi riots case

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Former JNU student leader Sharjeel Imam, arrested under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, on Saturday filed a plea in the Supreme Court, challenging the rejection of his bail plea by the Delhi High Court.

A special leave petition was filed on his behalf by his advocate against the High Court's Tuesday order, which dismissed the bail petitions filed by Umar Khalid, Sharjeel and others in the case related to a larger conspiracy for the 2020 Delhi riots.

A division bench had noted the nature of the allegations, and specifically the submission by the State that it is not a case of regular protest or riot matter, but rather a premeditated, well-orchestrated conspiracy to commit unlawful activities threatening the unity, integrity, and sovereignty of India.

CBI director hospitalised in Hyd

HYDERABAD, DHNS: CBI Director Praveen Sood, who was in Hyderabad on a personal visit, was admitted to a private hospital on Saturday after suddenly falling ill.

Sood developed health complications while returning from Srisailam and was immediately taken to the hospital upon his arrival in Hyderabad.

His condition is now reported to be stable.

Praveen Sood had arrived in Telangana two days earlier and travelled to Srisailam on Friday to visit the Bhramarambika and Mallikarjuna Swamy temples. After having darshan at the temple, Sood departed for Hyderabad on Saturday morning. Upon reaching the city, he was rushed to a private hospital in Jubilee Hills.

He had also met with officials of the central agency during his visit.

His trip to Telangana and Hyderabad has gained significance following the Telangana government's recent orders seeking a CBI probe into the Kaleshwaram project.

Kerala: 1 more dies of brain infection

WAYANAD (KERALA), PTI: A 45-year-old man died from amoebic meningoencephalitis, a rare and often fatal brain infection, while undergoing treatment at Kozhikode Medical College Hospital, health officials said on Saturday.

The deceased was identified as Ratheesh, a native of Sultan Bathery here.

He was also suffering from cardiac issues, they said.

As many as 11 people are now under treatment at the medical college in Kozhikode with the symptoms of the disease, they said.

Three persons had succumbed to amoebic brain fever in the state in August.

In view of the deaths, the health department issued guidelines for the treatment of amoebic meningoencephalitis, the rare brain infection caused by free-living amoeba in contaminated waters.

GRAND FAREWELL

People take part in a procession of 'Lalbaugcha Raja' idol of Lord Ganesha before 'visarjan' in Mumbai on Saturday. PTI

Man held for 'terror threat' to Mumbai

MUMBAI, DHNS: The Mumbai Police on Saturday arrested a 51-year-old man for allegedly sending a threat message coinciding with Ganeshotsav that suicide bombers planned a major strike in India's financial capital.

The accused—identified as Ashwini Kumar (51), an astrologer and vastu consultant from Patliputra in Bihar's Patna—was arrested from Noida. in Uttar Pradesh.

The message on the Mumbai Traffic Police's WhatsApp helpline — purportedly from "Lashkar-e-Jihadi" — claimed that 34 cars carrying human bombs would be used to detonate 400 kg of RDX, killing 1 crore people.

The message came on the eve of Anant Chaturdashi, the final day of the immersion, when a massive crowd was expected on the roads, sending the police into a tizzy.

"He wanted to take revenge on a friend who had filed a case against him in Patna in 2023, in which he was jailed for three months. To settle scores, Kumar sent the threat message using his (friend's) name," a police officer said.

Row over Ajit Pawar rebuking woman IPS officer escalates

MRITYUNJAY BOSE
MUMBAI, DHNS

The controversy over Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar rebuking sub-divisional police officer Anjana Krishna deepened further as the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi intensified the attack on Saturday after an NCP MLC shot off a letter to the UPSC seeking to enquire into educational and caste documents submitted by the officer.

Ajit Pawar

While NCP chief Pawar said that his intention was not to interfere with the police operation, but to de-escalate it. The letter sent by NCP spokesperson Amol Mitkari has compounded the issue.

Referring to the police officer, Mitkari said, "If she says she does not recognise the state's deputy chief minister, her recruitment process must be scrutinised. I have written to the UPSC seeking a probe." In the viral video, Anjana had reportedly told Pawar that she did not recognise him and asked him to call her directly.

However, Mitkari later withdrew the statement and tendered an unconditional apology.

"I unconditionally retract my tweet regarding the Solapur incident and express my regret. This was not my party's position, but my personal position," he said.

Meanwhile, the opposition parties slammed the government over the issue. NCP (SP) national spokesperson Clyde Crasto said: "The letter to UPSC by Mitkari is further intimidation of an honest officer, Anjana Krishna... The tactics adopted by these leaders are an indication that they are trying to muzzle her voice." He also congratulated Anjana for doing her duty "diligently and honestly".

Similarly, Congress leader Yashomati Thakur said: "It is deplorable that a leader of the NCP, which claims to follow the ideology of Shivaji-Shahu-Phule-Ambedkar, has stooped to commenting on caste of an IPS officer?".

Life like open book: Harish Rao on Kavitha's graft allegations

HYDERABAD, DHNS: Former Telangana irrigation minister T Harish Rao, whom former BRS leader K Kavitha had accused of corruption during her father K Chandrashekar Rao's tenure as chief minister, said he would leave those allegations to her wisdom.

Rao, who was out of the country when Kavitha levelled corruption allegations in the Kaleshwaram project, arrived in Hyderabad on Saturday. He stated that his life was an open book.

"My 25-year-long political journey is like an open book before the Telangana people. Her comments were the same allegations that some political parties have been making against me for some time now. Why did she make those allegations? I leave it to her wisdom," he said.

'AMERICA FIRST' ENFORCERS Hardline loyalists and hawkish advisers form the backbone of the Trump administration

The people driving Trump's second-term agenda and reshaping US policy

The second term of United States President Donald Trump, which began on January 20, 2025, sees a select group of trusted aides, operatives and hardline loyalists stepping into key positions to shape his policies and implement his vision. From Peter Navarro, the assertive and hawkish trade strategist, to Kash Patel, the steadfast national security loyalist and Tom Homan, the hardline immigration enforcer, these figures form the backbone of Trump's administration — where ideological zeal meets personal loyalty.

Donald Trump

Marco Rubio (54)
Secretary of State

A political hawk who sees China as America's top adversary. He is leading the America First agenda on foreign policy and is opposed to the sending of US troops to police trouble spots around the world. He helped shape hardline US policy on Venezuela, Cuba, and China, pushing for sanctions, stronger human rights measures, and technology restrictions. He also backed closer US–India ties, especially in defence and security, while urging India to reduce dependence on Russian arms and energy.

Pete Hegseth (45)
Secretary of Defense

A military veteran and media figure, despite several controversies, he has streamlined the Pentagon, reinforcing a more aggressive military posture and overseeing symbolic rebranding to the "Department of War." On India, he is forging a long-term defence framework, affirming US support for Indian security, and championing deeper integration through QUAD exercises, shared logistics networks, and defence-industrial collaboration.

Kash Patel (44)
FBI Director

A close ally of Trump, the Indian-origin former prosecutor, since his appointment, has rapidly restructured the agency – relocating thousands of staff, decentralising command, and reframing the FBI's mission under his leadership – while generating debate over his pace of reform and partisan leanings.

Peter Navarro (76)
Trade Adviser

Trump's most hawkish economic aide is the man behind a maximalist approach to imposing tariffs on US trading partners. He has made several controversial anti-India remarks, blaming New Delhi for indirectly fuelling Russia's war by calling it a "laundromat for the Kremlin" and even dubbing the Ukraine conflict "Modi's war." He branded India the "Maharaja of tariffs," accused it of being a "strategic freeloader," and sparked outrage with a casteist remark that "Brahmins are profiteering off the Indian people."

Howard Lutnick (64)
Commerce Secretary

The billionaire businessman brings his Wall Street experience to trade and economic policy. He has been outspoken about India's pivotal role in global markets, calling it the "vowel in BRICS" and insisting that New Delhi must make a clear choice to side with the West rather than hedge between the US, Russia, and China. He views stronger US–India trade ties as central to countering Chinese dominance and has urged India to embrace deeper integration with Western supply chains and financial systems.

Susie Wiles (58)
Chief of Staff

She is a seasoned political consultant and lobbyist, best known as the first woman to serve as White House Chief of Staff. Renowned for her quiet strength and low public profile, she earned the nickname "Ice Maiden" for her composed and resolute style. Trump has hailed her as "tough, smart, innovative, and universally admired," crediting her with bringing stability and discipline to the White House in contrast to his turbulent first term.

Pam Bondi (59)
Attorney General

Known for her tough stance on immigration, opioids, and human trafficking, she has reinstated stricter asylum rules. A staunch Trump ally, her tenure has drawn both praise for loyalty and criticism over politicisation of the Justice Department and controversial policy reversals.

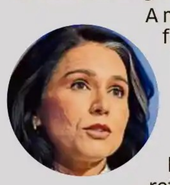
Tom Homan (63)
Border Czar

A seasoned immigration enforcer who rose to prominence as acting ICE director (2017–2018), recognised for advising and executing the Trump administration's strict "zero-tolerance" immigration policies. He returned as Trump's "Border Czar," spearheading aggressive deportation strategies, coordinating local enforcement efforts and setting high arrest goals amid significant political controversy.

Robert F. Kennedy Jr (71)
Health and Human Services Secretary

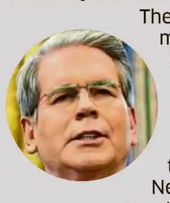
A lifelong environmental advocate and controversial public health figure, he has launched sweeping agency restructuring, cut hundreds of health programmes and jobs, and advanced disputed positions on vaccine policy and autism research. His tenure has sparked fierce criticism from public health experts, media commentators, and his own family – yet he continues to hold firm with the backing of Trump.

Tulsi Gabbard (44)
National Intelligence Agency chief



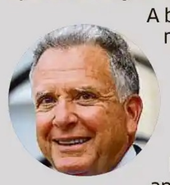
A military veteran and former Congresswoman, she became the first female combat veteran, Pacific Islander, and Hindu to hold the post. She has initiated sweeping reforms to streamline the intelligence community and cut down staff by nearly half. Her tenure is marked by bold actions such as revoking security clearances, investigating leaks, and undertaking diplomatic outreach across the Indo-Pacific, all amid controversy over her qualifications and past political stances.

Scott Bessent (63)
Treasury Secretary



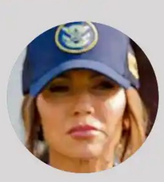
The billionaire hedge fund manager has championed extending tax cuts, reducing deficits, and reviewing the Federal Reserve's role. On India, Bessent stresses that Washington and New Delhi are "two great countries" that will resolve trade disputes, while cautioning against India's economic ties with Russia and China, which he argues undermine global stability; nonetheless, he frames India as a vital partner for integrating into Western supply chains and countering Beijing's dominance.

Steve Witkoff (68)
Special Envoy to the Middle East



A billionaire real-estate mogul turned Trump confidant, despite lacking any diplomatic training, he has brokered several ceasefires in Gaza, negotiated hostage exchanges, and spearheaded a prisoner release from Russia, all leveraging his personal relationships and dealmaking flair. His tenure reflects high-stakes, unconventional diplomacy: pushing for hardline positions like Iran's full nuclear disarmament while also delivering humanitarian ceasefires and exploring broader peace frameworks with Ukraine.

Kristi Noem (53)
Homeland Security Secretary



The seasoned politician has aggressively overhauled immigration policy, sharply tightened border enforcement, restructured cybersecurity efforts, and spearheaded international law enforcement partnerships. Her tenure is characterised by hardline immigration measures, operational discipline, and controversial yet decisive leadership in national security and DHS reform.

US threatens to down Venezuelan jets

Maduro vows to defend Venezuela's sovereignty as tensions rise with US

WASHINGTON/CARACAS, REUTERS/AP/PTI

Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro (2nd-L) arrives for a meeting with military officials in Caracas on Friday. AFP

United States President Donald Trump on Friday threatened to shoot down Venezuelan military jets if they pose a danger to US forces, as Washington deploys F-35 warplanes to Puerto Rico amid efforts to combat Latin American drug cartels.

The 10 aircraft will join US warships already present in the southern Caribbean, increasing pressure on Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, whom the United States accuses of leading a drug cartel.

The standoff intensified after the Pentagon reported that two Venezuelan military planes flew near a US Navy vessel in international waters on Thursday in what it described as a "highly provocative" move.

Asked what steps he would take if further incidents occur, Trump said: "If they do put us in a dangerous position, they'll be shot down."

On Tuesday, US forces blew up an alleged drug boat in the Caribbean, which Trump linked to the Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua, killing 11 people.

The high-tech F-35 jets are being deployed to an airfield in Puerto Rico, a US Caribbean territory of more than three million people.

Meanwhile, Maduro vowed to defend Venezuela's sovereignty and urged Trump to engage in dialogue to avoid conflict.

Speaking at a military base in Caracas, Maduro said: "Venezuela is always ready for dialogue, but we demand respect. None of our differences justify a high-impact military conflict in South America."

Dressed in camouflage, Maduro oversaw a ceremony ordering the mobilisation of civilian militias and warned of an "armed struggle" if Venezuela is attacked.

He accused the US of fabricating drug-trafficking allegations to justify regime change, noting that Washington last month doubled its reward for his arrest to $50 million.

Washington has deployed more than 4,000 troops and naval assets to the region, stating the operation targets Latin American drug cartels.

While US officials have not indicated plans for a ground incursion into Venezuela, Maduro denounced the buildup as a threat of invasion.

The strike on the alleged drug boat has also drawn criticism across Latin America, a region historically wary of US military incursions.

Trump signs order offering some tariff exemptions to countries

US Prez trims tariffs on metals, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals

REUTERS

US President Donald Trump signed an executive order on Thursday granting tariff exemptions as early as Monday to trading partners that strike deals on industrial exports such as nickel, gold, other metals, pharmaceutical compounds, and chemicals.

Trump has spent his first seven months in office implementing significant tariff increases to reshape the global trading system, reduce US trade deficits, and secure concessions from partner countries. His latest order identifies more than 45 categories eligible for zero import tariffs from "aligned partners" that agree to framework pacts aimed at reducing Trump's "reciprocal" tariffs and duties imposed under the Section 232 national security statute.

Friday's order aligns US tariffs with existing framework commitments, including those with allies such as Japan and the European Union. Exemptions for countries with US trade deals are set to begin at 12:01 a.m. EDT/0401 GMT on Monday, the order stated.

Trump emphasised that his willingness to reduce tariffs depends on the "scope and economic value of a trading partner's commitments to the United States in its agreement on reciprocal trade" and on US national interests.

The tariff cuts cover items that "cannot be grown, mined, or naturally produced in the United States" or are not available in sufficient volume to meet domestic demand. A White House official said the order also creates new carve-outs for certain agricultural products, aircraft and parts, and non-patented pharmaceutical articles.

For countries that have concluded a "reciprocal" trade deal with the US, the order allows the US Trade Representative, the Commerce Department, and Customs to waive tariffs on covered imports without requiring a new executive order. Zero-tariff items identified in the order include graphite and various forms of nickel, a key ingredient in stainless steel production and electric vehicle batteries.

Israel asks Gaza City residents to flee

DEIR AL-BALAH, AP/PTI: The Israeli army issued evacuation orders and targeted high-rise buildings in famine-stricken Gaza City on Saturday, calling on Palestinians to move to the territory's south as it escalates operations ahead of a new offensive to seize the city of nearly 1 million.

Aid groups warn that a large-scale evacuation would exacerbate the humanitarian crisis in Gaza City, which the world's leading hunger watchdog says is suffering from famine as a result of Israel's restrictions on food into the territory.

Most families have already been displaced several times over the nearly two-year-long Israel-Hamas war and say they have nowhere left to go, as the Israeli military has repeatedly bombed tent encampments that it had designated as humanitarian zones.

Some Palestinians — who at times have nothing to eat for days in a row — say they are too weak to uproot themselves again.

Israeli military spokesperson Avichay Adraee urged Palestinians on Saturday to flee to the south of the Gaza Strip, saying on social media platform X that the army had declared the makeshift tent encampment of Muwasi and parts of the southern town of Khan Younis to be a humanitarian zone.

Anuparna Roy receives the Orizzonti Best Director Award for "Songs of Forgotten Trees" at the 82nd Venice International Film Festival in Italy on Saturday. REUTERS

'Father Mother Sister Brother' wins Golden Lion at Venice film festival

VENICE, REUTERS: US independent filmmaker Jim Jarmusch won the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival on Saturday for "Father Mother Sister Brother", a gentle comedy about family ties and ageing.

The Silver Lion grand jury prize went to "The Voice of Hind Rajab", a harrowing drama by French-Tunisian director Kaouther Ben Hania. The film tells the true story of five-year-old Palestinian girl Hind Rajab, killed along with her family in Gaza during Israel's current invasion. The movie's premiere left audiences in tears.

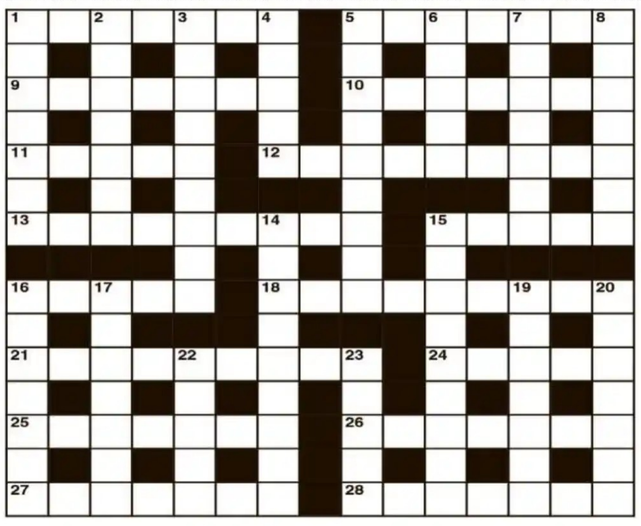
Italy's Toni Servillo won the best actor award for his role as an ageing Italian president nearing the end of his mandate in "La Grazia". China's Xin Zhilei was named best actress for "The Sun Rises On Us All", which explores sacrifice, guilt and unresolved emotions between estranged partners.

Benny Safdie won best director for "The Smashing Machine". The special jury award went to "Below the Clouds".

WIN FOR ANUPARNA

■ Indian filmmaker Anuparna Roy won Best Director in the Orizzonti section at the 82nd Venice International Film Festival for "Songs of Forgotten Trees". Roy described the moment as "surreal". She dedicated the award to "everyone in my hometown and country". The film explores the evolving relationship between two migrant women in Mumbai. The Orizzonti section highlights new trends, debut works, young talent, independent films and lesser-known cinema.

◆ SUNDAY CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 2644 ◆



ACROSS
1 Musical accompaniment (7)
5 US state; country of SE Europe (7)
9 Italian rice-based dish (7)
10 Large, fast-running bird (7)
11 Obliterate (5)
12 Small letters (5,4)
13 Enforce discipline (4,5)
15 Subject written about (5)
16 Consume alcohol (5)
18 US Military Academy (4,5)
21 A spin-off (2-7)
24 Fast (5)
25 Bound (7)
26 Dishonourable (3-4)
27 Feel uncomfortably hot (7)
28 Control and make use of (7)

DOWN
1 In a state of frenzy (7)
2 Small waterfall (7)
3 On trial (2,3,4)
4 Angry murmur (5)
5 Charitable acts (4,5)
6 Peripheral (5)
7 Pull a face (7)
8 Accomplish (7)
14 In the antipodes (4,5)
15 High social position (3,6)
16 Questionable (7)
17 Sudden spontaneous inclination (7)
19 Ameliorate (7)
20 News (7)
22 Should (5)
23 Cultivated soil (5)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 4004

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 9, Ill-gotten 10, P-article 12, High 13, Freeze 14, Draught 15, On the-m-end 17, Speed-well 18, Fast-E-N-S 20, R-ed-h-ot 21, Er-go 24, Re-cent-ly 26, H-ell-b-ent 28, Tied 29, S-paces 31, Sea legs 34, Attention 36, Stead-fast 38, Drawing 39, R-E-ally 40, Slip 41, Specific 42, Sun-flower.
DOWN: 1, Right off 2, S-light 3, Starters 4, In-deed 5, Ap-peased 6, Bridge roll 7, Rib-and-s 8, (to)P-lague 11, S-tilton 16, Eleven (11) 19, Swede 20, Ray 22, Range 23, A-board 25, Tipping off 26, Has 27, Strands 30, Contract 31, Spelling 32, Set a-part 33, Unh-it-ch 35, Tramps 36, Spar-s-e 37, Allows.

EASY
ACROSS: 9, Reception 10, Reticent 12, Crew 13, Finite 14, Oddball 15, Interfere 17, Impatient 18, Element 20, Ragged 21, Gale 24, Generate 26, Sheepish 28, Lute 29, Scared 31, Brittle 34, Tarantula 36, Glistened 38, Enchant 39, Adrift 40, Stun 41, Diagonal 42, Ignorance.
DOWN: 1, Practise 2, Accept 3, Diligent 4, Inside 5, Breeding 6, Atmosphere 7, Acidity 8, Engage 11, Flatter 16, Reeked 19, Elect 20, Rye 22, Asset 23, Sprint 25, Accountant 26, Sad 27, Clutter 30, Readable 31, Briefing 32, Endanger 33, Enlarge 35, Recoil 36, Garlic 37, Noting.

SU DO KU X - 3669

8				3		5		4
			9	7	6			
			5	4				
7			3			9		
		4		1				
							3	
					2		7	5
		9				1		

SOLUTION TO 3668

3	9	7	1	8	5	2	6	4
6	8	1	9	4	2	5	3	7
4	2	5	6	3	7	1	9	8
1	5	9	4	6	8	3	7	2
2	4	8	7	9	3	6	1	5
7	6	3	2	5	1	4	8	9
9	3	6	8	2	4	7	5	1
8	7	4	5	1	6	9	2	3
5	1	2	3	7	9	8	4	6

To solve the puzzle:
The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

Nikhat Zarin

Lovlina exits as Nikhat progresses

LIVERPOOL, PTI: Star boxers Nikhat Zareen and Lovlina Borgohain endured contrasting outings on their international return, as the two-time world champion advanced while the Tokyo Olympics medallist made an early exit from the World Boxing Championships here on Saturday.

Unseeded Nikhat, who had been sidelined by injury since her second-round exit in Paris last August, looked sharp in her comeback fight in the women's 51kg division. She eased past the USA's Jennifer Lozano with a commanding 5-0 unanimous decision in the round of 32.

In stark contrast, Lovlina, seeded No. 1 in the women's 75kg category, fell flat in her opening contest, losing 0-5 against Turkey's Busra Isildar in the round of 16.

There was disappointment on the men's side too, with debutant Hitesh Gulia, a two-time World Cup medallist, crashing out in the 70kg category. Seeded third, Gulia suffered a narrow 1-4 defeat after a late lapse proved costly against the Netherlands' Bos Finn Robert.

Asian Games bronze medallist Narender Berwal began his campaign with a hard-fought win, defeating Ireland's Martin Christopher McDonagh in the men's +90kg opening bout on Friday night.

Three Indians in finals of Wushu Worlds

NEW DELHI, PTI: India produced a strong show at the 17th World Wushu Championship in Brazil with three women entering the finals and two men advancing to the knockout stages.

In the women's category, Aparna showcased brilliant skills, defeating Tharisa Dea Florientina from Indonesia in 52 kg category to secure her place in the final, according to a release shared by Wushu Association of India.

Zim stun SL to level series

HARARE, AFP: Zimbabwe levelled a Twenty20 series against Sri Lanka in Harare with a five-wicket victory in a low scoring match on Saturday.

Sri Lanka were all out for 80 their second lowest T20 total -- and Zimbabwe made 84-5 to win with 34 balls remaining.

Brief scores: Sri Lanka: 80 all out in 17.4 overs (Brad Evans 3-15, Blessing Muzarabani 2-14, Sikandar Raza 3-11) It to Zimbabwe: 84/5 in 14.2 overs (Dushmantha Chameera 3-19). **Result:** Zim won by 5 wkts. **Series:** Zim level the 3-match series 1-1.

◆ ON TV ◆

HOCKEY

Men's Asia Cup: Japan vs Bangladesh **(2:30 pm)**; Third/fourth place playoff **(5:00 pm)**; Final **(7:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Ten 1.**

Women's Asia Cup: Thailand vs Japan **(9:45 am)**; India vs Singapore **(12 pm)**; Malaysia vs Chinese Taipei **(4:45 pm)**; South Korea vs China **(7:00 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Ten 2**.

FOOTBALL

FIFA WC qualifiers: Croatia vs Montenegro; Greece vs Denmark; Israel vs Italy; Switzerland vs Slovenia **(all 12:15 am on Monday)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network.**

TENNIS

US Open: Men's final **(11:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports 1** & **JioHotstar.**

ARCHERY

World Archery Championships: Compound women pre-quarterfinals **(6:30 am)** on **Sony Sports Ten 2**

MOTORSPORT

Formula 1: Italian GP **(Race, 6:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **FanCode, F1 TVPro.**

HOCKEY ASIA CUP

Relaxed Indians toy with China

Harmanpreet & Co post 7-0 win to set up final date with Korea

HITA PRAKASH
RAJGIR, DHNS

Indian hockey thrives on edge-of-the-seat action. The ongoing Asia Cup has been no exception, with the 'will they or won't they reach the final' question hinging on Saturday's last Super 4s clash against China. That uncertainty, however, had been resolved even before they could take the field on Saturday for their last match in the Super 4s with South Korea's win against Malaysia in an earlier confirming India's progress to the summit clash.

Harmanpreet's men, though, weren't going to take the inconsequential game against China lightly. With spring in their foot, India hammered an out-of-sorts China 7-0 to storm into the final in style.

Carrying the momentum from their win against Malaysia on Thursday, Shilanand Lakra (4th), Dilpreet Singh (7th), Mandeep Singh (18th), Raj Kumar Pal (37th), Sukhjeet Singh (39th) and Abhishek (46th, 50th) netted goals for the hosts.

The win put India on top of the Super 4s table with seven points and a timely confident-booster ahead of the final against Korea who secured a comeback victory over Malaysia to gather four points and finish ahead of China.

The relaxed Indians played free-flowing hockey in front of the most raucous crowd here so far in an overflowing stadium.

From the word go, the Chinese found it difficult to break the sync the Indians were in. The first of the rewards came when a high ball from Harmanpreet to Jarmanpreet Singh was fed to Shilanand Lakra who slotted it into the net. Goal two was a flick rebound tapped in by Dilpreet Singh.

In the second quarter, Mandeep Singh converted another PC in a similar manner as India went up 3-0 in the 18th minute.

Momentum

The favourable momentum, healthy lead and a flummoxed opponent meant that the home side could afford to waste some time to reserve energy for the big game 24 hours later perhaps. Midfielder Manpreet Singh and forward Mandeep were seen taking the liberty of making a few interesting shots at the goal for fun until half-time.

The turnover had India mixing up the positions of the players to dominate the proceedings mostly inside the 25-yard line of captain Chongcong Chen and his men.

While Raj Kumar Pal (37th) added the fourth goal, Sukhjeet Singh drove a diving forehand into the back of the net in the 39th minute to end the third quarter at 5-0.

In the final 15 minutes, striker Abhishek's soft touch gave India its sixth before his love for reverse hits in front of the post paid dividends to give his second and the team's seventh goal.

Korea upset Malaysia

Sitting at a comfortable 3-1 lead, things drastically went downhill for favourites Malaysia when the gritty Koreans fought their way back into the game to score a 4-3 upset win and dash Malaysian hopes.

On Sunday, the Marhan Jalil-led side will play for a consolation third place in the playoff against China.

Results: Super 4s: India: 7 (Shilanand Lakra 4th, Dilpreet Singh 7th, Mandeep Singh 18th, Raj Kumar Pal 37th, Sukhjeet Singh 39th, Abhishek 46th, 50th) bt China: 0; Korea: 4 (Hyeonhong Kim 24th, 51st, Seyong Oh 44th, Jungjun Lee 50th) bt Malaysia: 3 (Fitri Saari 9th, Aiman Rozemi 29th, Syed Cholan 31st).

5th-8th placings: Kazakhstan: 6 (Agymtay Duisengazy 12th, 23rd, 30th, 36th, 56th, Altynbek Aitkaliyev 47th) bt Chinese Taipei: 4 (Yu-Cheng Chang 7th, Tsung-Yu Hsieh 13th, 18th, 31st).

India's Dilpreet Singh (centre) celebrates with team-mates after scoring a goal against China during their Men's Asia Cup Super 4s match in Rajgir, Bihar, on Saturday. PTI

MEN'S FINAL: INDIA VS KOREA, LIVE ON SONY SPORTS TEN1, 7.30 PM

India fight back to secure draw vs Japan

HANGZHOU (CHINA), PTI

Navneet Kaur struck from a penalty corner seconds before the final hooter as India came from behind twice to hold defending champions Japan 2-2 in their second pool match of the women's Asia Cup hockey tournament here on Saturday.

In a pulsating pool B match, Hiroka Murayama gave Japan the lead in the 10th minute before India's Rutaja Dadaso Pisal equalised in the 30th minute. Chiko Fujibayashi again put Japan ahead in the 58th minute only to see Navneet restore the parity in the 60th minute.

India, who had thrashed Thailand 11-0 in their opening match, face Singapore in their final pool B match on Monday. India are currently ranked 10th in the world, while Japan are placed at 12th.

Goalscorer Navneet Kaur (right) high-fives team-mate Bansari Solanki after the final hooter of India's match against Japan in Huangzhou on Saturday. HOCKEY INDIA

It was a quick start from India with attacks on the Japanese citadel. However, Japan absorbed the initial pressure and they even drew first blood when Murayama found the back of the net to round off a sweeping move.

Japan led 1-0 and kept India at bay for the remainder of the first quarter. The Indians pressed hard with more attacks in the hunt for the equaliser. Japan were not giving away and made it tough for the Indians.

But, in the final minutes of the first half, India found a way through as Rutuja scored just before the breather and brought the contest level at 1-1. The two teams went into the break with the scores levelled.

The tournament features eight teams, and the top two from each of the two pools will qualify for the Super 4s stage.

BCCI to elect president on Sept 28 AGM

MUMBAI, PTI: The BCCI's annual general meeting will be held in here on September 28 with elections for several posts including the Board's president and the IPL chairman being among the top agenda.

The post of the BCCI's president has been vacant following the exit of former India cricketer Roger Binny earlier this month, while the Indian Premier League chairman Arun Dhumal is likely to go for a mandatory cool-off period after completing a cumulative period of six years.

While the election is supposed to take place for all key posts in the BCCI, it is effectively only for one position as the others are likely to continue in their roles.

BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia, who has completed a total of three years, including two years and three months as joint secretary and nine months as the secretary, is set to continue.

BCCI adds Rs 14,627 crore

NEW DELHI, PTI: The BCCI has strengthened its coffers by Rs 14,627 crore over the past five years, including Rs 4,193 crore in the last financial year alone, taking its cash and bank balance to Rs 20,686 crore, according to a report.

The rise, recorded after disbursing all dues to state units, has seen the general fund almost double from Rs 3,906 crore in 2019 to Rs 7,988 crore in 2024 as per the figures shared with state associations, says a report in Cricbuzz.

The figures will be formally presented at the Annual General Meeting on September 28.

CRICKET DULEEP TROPHY

SZ in front despite Khajuria ton

Central have one foot in the final after taking 118-run lead against West

SIDNEY KIRAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

North Zone's Shubham Khajuria struck a fine century but two wickets late in the day saw South Zone wrest the initiative on a battling day in their Duleep Trophy semifinal here on Saturday.

Starting the day staring at surpassing an imposing 536, North Zone seemed to be in all sorts of trouble when they were reduced to 38/2 after opening pacers Gurjapneet Singh (3/67) and MD Nidheesh dished out a strong display with the new ball at the BCCI Centre of Excellence. The duo bent their backs and elicited several appeals to leave North under a lot of pressure.

But Khajuria, one of the finest batters from Jammu and Kashmir and playing his 75th first-class match, brought his experience to the fore with a courageous 128 not out off 245 balls. With Haryana's Nishant Sindhu too defying South Zone with a dogged 82 off 148 balls and forging a 171-run partnership for the fourth wicket with Khajuria, North took the fight to South. The way the duo were batting, almost without any trouble on a placid wicket, it looked like the game was heading to a fascinating final day with both teams vying for the all-important first innings lead.

However, a rash shot from Sindhu late in the day has now seemingly tilted the scales in favour of South. Having done hardly anything wrong until then and with stumps in sight, Sindhu chose to cut Tamil Nadu's Gurjapneet despite a deep third man in position. It was a trap laid out by South and Sindhu just fell for it, caught by substitute fielder Shaik Rasheed.

One wicket led to another as skipper Mohammed Azharuddeen ran new man Kanhaiya Wadhawan out for a three-ball duck. From looking robust at one stage despite an early wobble, North slipped to 278/5 in 79 overs, still 258 runs behind South with the onus now on Khajuria to once again do all the heavy lifting on the final day.

Unlike some of his batting colleagues, who erred in the middle, the 29-year-old Khajuria was all composure throughout his innings. A strong off-side player, he drove and cut brilliantly to nicely mix caution with aggression.

Shubham Khajuria's ton kept North Zone's hopes of a first-innings lead alive in their Duleep Trophy semifinal against South Zone in at BCCI's CoE on Saturday. PTI

Central take lead

Shubham Sharma fell four runs short of a deserved century while Rajat Patidar (77), Upendra Yadav (87) and Harsh Dubey (75) struck half-centuries as Central Zone totally dominated a star-studded West Zone on the penultimate day of their semifinal.

Resuming the day at a commanding 229/2 in pursuit of West Zone's 438, Central rode on a complete team effort to slay a strong West Zone. With as many as five batters scoring half-centuries, including a 76 from Danish Malewar on Friday, Central never looked in any danger whatsoever, taking stumps at 556/8 in 157 overs. With just a day to go, Central have all but assured themselves of a spot in the final, due to be held from Sept 11-15.

Brief scores: South Zone: 536 vs North Zone: 278/5 in 79 overs (Shubham Khajuria 128 n.o., Ayush Badoni 40, Nishant Sindhu 82; Gurjapneet Singh 3-67).
West Zone: 438 vs Central Zone (O/n: 229/2): 556/8 in 157 overs (Ayush Pandey 40, Danish Malewar 76, Shubham Sharma 96, Rajat Patidar 77, Upendra Yadav 87, Harsh Dubey 75, Saransh Jain 37 n.o., Deepak Chahar 33; Dharmendrasinh Jadeja 4-101).

Iyer to lead India A; Rahul for 2nd game

MUMBAI, PTI

Left out of the Test scheme of things as well as the upcoming Asia Cup T20Is, Shreyas Iyer was on Saturday entrusted with leading the India A team in the two unofficial four-day games against Australia A in Lucknow.

Senior India players KL Rahul and Mohammed Siraj will be available for the second fixture.

Iyer, not picked even among the reserves for the Asia Cup beginning Tuesday, is currently turning out for West Zone in the Duleep Trophy semifinal against Central Zone in Bengaluru.

The first unofficial Test will be played from September 16-19 and the second from September 23-26 at the Ekana Stadium. Karun Nair, who had suffered an injury while batting in the fifth and final Test at The Oval against England, has not been named in the side.

India wicketkeeper-batter Dhruv Jurel, who played the fifth Test in England, has been named Iyer's deputy.

Rahul and Siraj will join the squad for the second multi-day match as they will get quality match practice ahead of home Test series against the West Indies and South Africa.

India's home season begins with a two-match Test series against the West Indies, with the first match to be played at Ahmedabad from October 2.

The India A squad includes Tamil Nadu wicketkeeper-batter N Jagadeesan, who was called up as a cover for the fifth Test in England.

Among batters, Abhimanyu Easwaran, Sai Sudharsan and Devdutt Padikkal have been named along with Delhi skipper Ayush Badoni, who received his maiden call-up, while India all-rounder Nitish Kumar Reddy has also been named in the A side.

Shreyas Iyer

INDIA A SQUAD

- Shreyas Iyer (c), Dhruv Jurel (vc & wk), Abhimanyu Easwaran, N Jagadeesan (wk), Sai Sudharsan, Devdutt Padikkal, Harsh Dubey, Ayush Badoni, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Tanush Kotian, Prasidh Krishna, Gurnoor Brar, Khaleel Ahmed, Manav Suthar, Yash Thakur.

Dhruv's big ton steers Vijaya CC into semifinal

BENGALURU, DHNS: Powered by Dhruv Krishnan's 145 Vijaya Cricket Club coasted to a comprehensive 192-run win over Century Cricketers in the KSCA Group I U-19 Inter-club tournament here.

Besides Dhruv's big century, Aadharsh SJ (43) and Aniketh Reddy (48) provided solid support as Vijaya CC posted an impressive 291/9 in their stipulated 50 overs.

In reply, Century Cricketers didn't measure up to the task and were bundled out for 99 in 29.2 overs with Vaibhav C snaring 3/28.

Brief scores: Quarterfinals: Vijaya Cricket Club: 291/9 in 50 overs (Aadharsh SJ 43, Dhruv Krishnan 145, Aniketh Reddy 48; Arjun Kumar 2-45, Uday Charan R 2-61, Sanket Shetty 2-37) bt Century Cricketers: 99 all out in 29.2 overs (Aadesh D Urs 27, Sriee Krish RA 26; Vaibhav C 3-28).
Jawans Cricket Club: 192/9 in 50 overs (Arnav Anil 59, Nishchinth Parmashwar 52, Lohith S 28; Vikram 2-24, Arush Jain 2-38, Vaasav Venkatesh 2-30) bt Bangalore Sports Club: 157 all out in 45.5 overs (Arush Jain 55, Rishabh Dhariwal 29, Kush Kumar Jha 23; Eesa Hakeem Puthige 4-35, Lohith S 2-22, Arya J Gowda 2-30).
Dooravani Cricketers (1): 197 all out in 49.3 overs (Harshit Pai 47, Shivu M 86; Samyak Vellalore 2-27, Jayanth R Gowda 2-24, Manik Raj 2-42, Manikanth Shivanand 2-39) lt to Vultures Cricket Club: 198/2 in 36.5 overs (Atharv Malviya 86 n.o., Manikanth Shivanand 86).
Swastic Union Cricket Club (1): 193 all out in 49.1 overs (Raag Punja 31, Nitish Arya 62; Sukruth J 5-30) bt Swastic Union Cricket Club (2): 189/9 in 50 overs (Nabhas V 41, Sukruth J 33, Mohd Mohib Jamadar 26, Khush Kothari 28; Avaneesh Poonacha 3-47, Rohit RV 3-17).

Deepshika, Rohit clinch titles

BENGALURU, DHNS

Rohith Gobinath and Deepshika Vinayagamurthy scripted contrasting victories to emerge champions in the boys' and girls' singles events at the KSLTA ITF World Tennis Tour Juniors at the SM Krishna Tennis Stadium here on Saturday.

Top seed Snigdha Kanta dominated the opening 6–1 but Deepshika Vinayagamurthy showed grit to claw back in a tight second set. The 15-year-old broke Snigdha's second serve to take a 3-1 lead, only for her opponent to snap back. Neither athlete gave an inch in a gruelling set to reach 6-6 before Deepshika sealed the tiebreak, with only three points conceded.

In the decider, Deepshika went ahead 3-1 before Snigdha fought back to 3–3. Tensions peaked when Snigdha broke back at 4–5 to stay alive. But Deepshika dug deep and bagged the set 7–5 to take the title.

In the boys' final, Rohith breezed past his opponent Om Verma 7-5, 6-1 to secure the title in just 87 minutes.

Deepshika Vinayagamurthy

Rohith Gobinath

Venkatesh, Madhav put Secretary's XI in command

BENGALURU, DHNS

After fighting back on the second day, KSCA Secretary's XI continued to dominate proceedings on the third against the Gujarat Cricket Association in the Dr (Capt) K Thimmappiah memorial tournament here on Saturday.

Having reduced Gujarat to 73/5 at stumps, Venkatesh M's 5/53 helped the Secretary's XI take a big step towards victory as they shot out GCA to 138 all out in their first innings.

Following on, GCA's slide continued as they lost three quick wickets for 43 runs. However, Umang Kumar (73) and Abhishek Desai (47) held the fort, before they were sent packing by Madhav P Bajaj.

GCA still trail Secretary's XI by 40 runs, with just three wickets left in their second innings.

M Venkatesh. DH FILE PHOTO

Brief scores: At Kini Sports: KSCA Secretary's XI: 373 all out in 149.4 overs vs Gujarat Cricket Association: (O/n: 73/5): 138 all out (Priyesh Patel 30; Venkatesh M 5-53, Madhav P Bajaj 2-44) & 195/7 in 53.3 (Abhishek Desai 47, Umang Kumar 73; Madhav P Bajaj 3-63, Dhruv P 2-49).
At Alur 2: KSCA President's XI: 250 all out in 91.5 overs (Jasper EJ 87, Karthik SU 32, Harsha Wardhan Khuba 32, Adithya Nair 34; Nadeem Shaikh 4-49, Akshay Waikar 2-78, Satyajeet Bachhav 3-57) vs Maharashtra Cricket Association: (O/n: 14/0): 293/5 in 83 overs (Anirudha Sabale 43, Digvijay Patil 68, Mandar Bhandari 60, Mizaan Sayyed 71 n.o., Satyajeet Bachhav 29 n.o.; Shreesha S Achar 2-91).
At SDNRW: Andhra Cricket Association: 257 & 20/2 (Mahesh Pithiya 2-2) vs Baroda Cricket Association: (O/n: 285/6): 424/9 in 152.5 overs (Jyotsnil Singh 50, Shashwat Rawat 28, Sukrit Pandey 156 n.o., Ninad Rathwa 62; Mitesh Patel 42, Mahesh Pithiya 48; Ashish S 3-117, KSN Raju 4-75).
At M Chinnaswamy Stadium: Goa CA: 211 & (O/n:104/2): 240 all out (Suyash Prabhudesai 29, Ishaan Gadekar 51, Abhinav Tejrana 47, Deepraj Gaonkar 36; Ganesh Bhosle 2-69, Praful Hinge 3-38, Nachiket Bhute 3-38) vs Vidarbha Cricket Association: 208 all out & 115/0 in 28 overs (Atharva Taide 49 n.o., Aman Mokhade 50 n.o.).
At IAF: Chhattisgarh State CS: 274 all out & 121/3 in 41 overs (Anuj Tiwari 31, Ashutosh Singh 42; Hardik Raj 2-37) vs KSCA XI: 250 all out (Shreyas Gopal 60, Smaran R 47, Hardik Raj 25).
At Alur 3: MPCA: (O/n: 77/1): 333/8 in 123 overs (Yash Dubey 38, Kushagra Nagar 25, Arshad Khan 102; Ajoy Sarkar 2-83, Rana Datta 3-21, Bikram Debnath 2-39, Sandip Sarkar 3-77) vs Tripura CA: 237/5 in 72 overs (Bikram Kumar Das 53, Hrituraj Ghosh Roy 33, Hanuma Vihari 56, Vijay Shankar 68 n.o.; Arshad Khan 2-32).
At SJCE: KSCA Colts: 140 all out & (O/n: 135/7): 203 all out in 46.1 overs (Aneeshwar Gautam 56, Mohsin Khan 46, Samarth N 31; Vipin Sharma 5-55, Divesh Sharma 3-58) vs HPCA: 303 all out & 41/0 in 6.4 overs.

SPRINT SPARK The new generation of sprinters is revolutionising India's story on the fast lane

Breaking the speed lock

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

Where is India's Usain Bolt? Why can't we find one fast runner in a country of 145 crore population? When will an Indian sprinter win a medal at the Olympics? These are some of the questions that are being asked of Indian athletics.

Answers to these questions will surely disappoint those who are looking for a medal being pulled like a rabbit out of the hat. But for those willing to be patient, there's a start.

In fact, there's a much-needed progress too, as the upcoming World Athletics Championships in Tokyo will see two sprinters — Animesh Kujur (200m) and Tejas Shirse (110m hurdles) — represent India for the first time. The duo has more in common than one may think as they have come out of the same programme that kicked off in Odisha under Reliance's British coach James Hillier in 2019.

Hillier, who now serves as the athletic director and oversees the programme in Bhubaneswar and Mumbai, has been in hot pursuit to rope in the best of sprint talents the country has produced in the last half a decade and nurtured them into consistent performers. The list includes Telangana's hurdler Jyothi Yarraji and Karnataka's sprinter Manikanta Hoblidhar, among others.

Call it coincidence or hard work, most of India's fastest timings in the events have come in the last three seasons. The British coach — who is supported by a team of other expert coaches, nutritionists and physiotherapists — essentially brought in the change in mindset of these young runners.

"When I arrived, I soon understood that Indian athletes were not running enough," Hillier told *DH*. "Call it lack of exposure, funds or habit, they may not run more than five competitions in a season. That had to change and I had to urge them gradually to run more."

Animesh Kujur is the fastest man in India with national records in both 100m and 200m. RELIANCE

Animesh leads the show

The star of the programme has been Animesh, who became the fastest man in the country in 2025 with national records in both 100m and 200m (10.18 and 20.32 seconds respectively). The Odisha athlete, who has been coached by Martin Owens at the same institution since 2023, has run 30-odd individual races since February 2025, and at least eight of them were faster than his last season's best efforts in both the sprint events.

This also notably included his best effort of 20.27 in Switzerland back in June, which wasn't eligible for the national record due to a strong tailwind assist. What stood out that his best always came in foreign conditions, going against the norms of Indian athletes doing well in friendly conditions. The likes of Neeraj Chopra and Avinash Sable are the exceptions. The 22-year-old Animesh, of course, joins that list too.

"For me to be faster than I am now, I must compete in quality events abroad," said Animesh. "India has a lot of quality sprinters now, and the facilities I get in Bhubaneshwar are top-notch too, but the best runners are all abroad. I may not run as fast as them, but I will only improve."

Like Animesh, Tejas has been a trailblazer in his event as well. The 23-year-old Maharashtra hurdler holds both the indoor (7.64 in the 60m H in 2025) and outdoor (13.41 in 2024) national records, eclipsing Siddhant Thingalaya, who dominated the hurdles for at least the last half-decade. Tejas, who could only run 12 races in the 2025 season due to injury, earned a World Athletics invitation at the last moment. The Tokyo ticket meant everything to the youngster, who couldn't make the cut for the Olympics last season.

Tejas Shirse became the second hurdler to qualify for World Championships since Siddhant Thingalaya in 2017. RELIANCE

Reality check

"This season was a turbulent one for me as it kept going up and down for me due to injury, but when I was finally given the berth, I felt all the hard work I did over the last two seasons came to fruition after missing Paris," said Tejas, whose current World Ranking is 63.

But does running in the upcoming Worlds put them anywhere near the medal chances on debut? Especially when Animesh failed to breach the direct qualification timing. His coach Owens who leads the High Performance Centre of the programme, gives the reality check.

"It's a step-up from the Asian Championships (Animesh won bronze with his current NR)," said Owens. "It's also a lot of the same people he interacted with in the Diamond League in Monaco (finished fourth among U-23 runners), but it's a different set-up because that's just one day, and this is a championship. There's more at stake here. People take this a lot more seriously. It's a great opportunity for him to see what the most professional, most successful athletes in the world are doing and bring that back to India."

To put his perspective into context, the world-leading time for the season is currently with the USA's superstar Noah Lyles at 19.63. World record, for that matter, lies with the legend Bolt at 19.19 (at 2009 Worlds). As far as the 110m hurdles are concerned, USA's Cordell Tinch leads the chart at 12.87, which is 0.07 off the world record mark.

So how are the likes of Animesh and Tejas going to approach the respective 48-man event, which starts with qualification heats to eventually into an 8-athlete showdown?

"I intend to treat the heat as a virtual final if I intend to survive for the semifinal," said Tejas. "Which is the reality, to be frank. Irrespective of the fact that this season hasn't been ideal fitness-wise, I am keeping the mindset that I will go all out for my season best or better a personal best."

The answer may disappoint the fans who would be expecting magical results when the duo takes the tracks mid-September in Tokyo. It seems to be a long road for India before we see our first sub-10 or sub-20 runners in sprint events, but there's hope, and Hillier sums it up better.

"When I came here, I was told Indians can't run faster than 10.20, but now I am hearing questions of 'when will we see our first sub-10 runner?' I call that progress," signed off the coach.

> When I came here (to India), I was told Indians can't run faster than 10.20, but now I am hearing questions of 'when will we see our first sub-10 runner?' I call that progress.
>
> **JAMES HILLIER,** Sprint coach

Animesh Kujur's best performances

200m
- **20.27 sec** (Geneva, June 2025)*
- **20.32** (Gumi, Korea, June) - **NR**
- **20.40** (Kochi, April)

Previous NR - **20.52** by Amlan Borgohain (2022)
WR - **19.19** by Usain Bolt (2009)
*Not eligible for NR due to +2.3 wind assist

100m
- **10.18** (Vari, Greece, July 2025) - NR
- **10.27** (Salamanca, Spain, 2024)
- **10.28** (Dehradun, Feb 2025)

Previous NR - **10.20** by Gurindervir Singh (March, 2025)
WR - **9.58** by Usain Bolt in 2009

Tejas Shirse's best performances

110m hurdles
- **13.41 sec** (Jyvaskyla, Finland, 2024) - NR
- **13.51** (Leuven, Belgium, August 2025)
- **13.52** (Taipei City, June 2025)

Previous NR - **13.48** by Siddhanth Thingalaya (2017)
WR - **12.80** by Aries Merritt (2012)

60m hurdles
- **7.64** (Miramas, France, Feb 2025) - NR
- **7.64** (Val-del-Ruii, France, Feb 2025)
- **7.65** (Luxembourg. Jun 2025)

Previous NR - **7.70** by Siddhanth Thingalaya (2017)
WR - **7.27** by Grant Holloway (2024)

NR: National record; **WR:** World record

Tejash, Anish shine in K'taka podium shows

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka riders produced a strong show in Round 3 of the MRF MMSC fmsci Indian National Motorcycle Racing Championship at the Madras International Circuit on Saturday.

Tumakuru's Tejash BA followed Solomon R home in second place in the Idemitsu Honda India Talent Cup (Honda CB 300F). Former two-time National champion Anish Damodara Shetty (Bengaluru) marked his comeback with a fine third-place finish in the Pro-Stock 301-400cc Open race, behind winner Rahil Pillarisetty (Hyderabad) and defending champion Sarthak Chavan (Pune).

Results: Race 1: Pro-Stock 301-400cc Open: Rahil Pillarisetty (Hyderabad, RACR Castrol Power1) (11 mins, 02.255secs) 1; Sarthak Chavan (Pune, Petronas TVS Racing) (11:02.570) 2; Anish Damodara Shetty (Bengaluru, RACR Castrol Power1) (11:09.875) 3.
Pro-Stock 200cc Open: Venkatesh Iyyappan (Chennai, Rookies Racing) (11:52.417) 1; Senthilkumar (Coimbatore, RDX Torque Racing) (11:52.451) 2; Soorya PM (Chandra LGE Racing) (11:52.503) 3.
Women (Apache RTR 200, 5 laps): Jagathishree Kumaresan (Chennai) (11:05.082) 1; SP Shuria (Trichy) (11:06.149) 2; Ananya Awasthi (Pune) (11:11.820) 3.
Idemitsu Honda India Talent Cup (Honda CB 300F): Solomon R (Chennai) (12:42.354) 1; Tejash BA (Tumakuru) (12:47.034) 2; Swaroop Krishna P (Thrissur) (12:48.986) 3.

Time And Tide for main event

PUNE SELECTIONS

Time And Tide, from the stables of Niraj Karanjawala and to be ridden by Sandesh, appeals most among six runners in the fray for the Akkasaheb Maharaj Trophy, the feature event of the Pune races on Sunday.
The first race starts at 1:30 pm.
1. World's Oldest Barbershop Trophy - 1200M: Moonlight Kiss 1, The Athabasca 2, Star Romance 3.
2. Lemon Tree Hotels Trophy - 2000M: Regina Memorabilis 1, Odysseis 2, Alpine Star 3.
3. Dinkoo N. Chenoy Salver (Div II) - 1200M: Eagle Eye 1, Allez L Etoile 2, Ensky 3.
4. Amjad Khan Trophy - 1400M: Spanish Eyes 1, Opus Dei 2, Liam 3.
5. Dinkoo N.Chinoy Salver (Div I) - 1200M: El Moran 1, Seneca 2, Aeon Flux 3.
6. Akkasaheb Maharaj Trophy - 1200M: Time And Tide 1, Credence 2, Magileto 3.
7. Rotary District 3131 September Handicap - 1600M: Enforcer 1, Phantasmique 2, Caradoc 3.
8. Spearhead Plate - 1600M: Goldiva 1, Yuletide 2, Speak The Breed 3.
Day's best: Eagle Eye. **Jackpot:** 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8. **I treble:** 5, 6 & 7. **II treble:** 6, 7 & 8.

TENNIS US OPEN

Alcaraz vs Sinner, again

Spaniard dashes Djokovic's 25th Slam hopes; Italian dumps Auger-Aliassime

NEW YORK, AFP

Carlos Alcaraz overpowered Novak Djokovic in straight sets on Friday to set up a blockbuster US Open final showdown against world No. 1 and defending champion Jannik Sinner.

Spanish second seed Alcaraz produced a ruthlessly efficient display to end Djokovic's latest bid for a record 25th Grand Slam title, winning 6-4, 7-6 (7/4), 6-2 in two hours and 23 minutes.

Spain's Carlos Alcaraz (left) and Italy's Jannik Sinner set up men's US Open final after beating Serbia's Novak Djokovic and Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime respectively in the semifinals on Friday. REUTERS/ AFP

Alcaraz was then followed into the final by arch-rival Sinner, who was forced to work hard by Canadian 25th seed Felix Auger-Aliassime before wrapping up a 6-1, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 victory on the Arthur Ashe Stadium court.

It means that Alcaraz and Sinner will collide in a third consecutive Grand Slam final this year on Sunday, where US President Donald Trump will be among a 23,000 crowd to watch the latest instalment of the gripping "Sincaraz" rivalry.

Alcaraz won the duo's first meeting in an epic five-hour 29-minute tussle at the French Open in June before Sinner dethroned the Spaniard in the final at Wimbledon the following month.

Alcaraz's victory over Djokovic suggested though that he is more than capable of ambushing Sinner in a match where the winner will be assured of the world No. 1 ranking on Monday.

The 22-year-old five-time Grand Slam winner has not dropped a set en route to the final but still believes he has room for improvement.

"Beating Novak is always special. But I don't feel like I've won anything more than a Grand Slam semifinal," Alcaraz said after downing the 38-year-old Djokovic. "It was an important match, but it was just a ticket to the final."

Djokovic said he plans to chase more Grand Slams next year, but admitted he was no longer physically capable of matching Alcaraz and Sinner.

"I'm happy with my level of tennis, but you know, it's just the physicality of it," Djokovic said after his exit. "That's something I, unfortunately at this point in time in my career, can't control."

Sinner meanwhile appeared to be readying another quickfire win as he sprinted through the opening set of his clash with the rangy Auger-Aliassime.

But the Canadian leveled by taking the second set only for Sinner to respond to claim the next two and a return to the final.

Sinner, who also won the Australian Open in January, is now only the fourth man in history to reach the finals of all four Grand Slams in a single season, joining an exclusive club whose other members are Rod Laver, Roger Federer and Djokovic.

"It's been an amazing season. The Grand Slams are the most important tournaments we have throughout the year," Sinner said.

The Italian's date with Alcaraz is also a rematch of their famous 2022 US Open quarterfinal five-setter, which finished at around 2.50am and remains the latest finish in tournament history.

"Sunday is a very special day and an amazing final again. I feel like our rivalry started here playing an amazing match," Sinner said in a nod to their 2022 classic.

"We are two different players now, with different confidence too. Let's see what's coming. We've played each other a lot, we know each other very well."

Women's doubles

In the women's doubles final on Friday, Gabriela Dabrowski and Erin Routliffe won their second US Open women's doubles title in three years after beating Taylor Townsend and Katerina Siniakova 6-4, 6-4.

Vaishali jumps into sole lead

SAMARKAND, PTI: Defending champion and Grandmaster R Vaishali jumped into sole lead in the women's section as she notched her third straight victory with a win against Olga Bedelka of Austria in the third round of the FIDE Grand Swiss here on Saturday.

On a day when Vantika Agrawal found the going tough and went down to Yuxin Song of China, D Harika was held to a draw by Guo Qi of China. Both Vantika and Harika are on 1.5 points apiece while Vaishali enjoys a half point lead over her nearest rivals.

In the open section, world champion D Gukesh punished some audacious play by Spaniard Daniil Yuffa and moved to 2.5 points out of a possible three.

Playing black, Gukesh opted for the Ragozin defense and was pleasantly surprised in the middle game as Yuffa went berserk with his attack.

Winning a piece, Gukesh had to find some defensive moves but white did not have any serious compensation anyway. The Indian ace won an easy game in the end.

Important and Indian results round 3 (Indians unless specified): Alireza Firouzja (Fra, 2) Parham Maghsoodloo (Iri, 2); Arjun Erigaisi (1.5) Anton Demchenko (Slo, 2); Boris Gelfand (Isr, 1.5) R Praggnanandhaa (1.5); Daniil Yuffa (Esp, 1.5) lt to D Gukesh (2.5); Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb, 1.5) Abhimanyu Puranik (1.5); Leon Luke Mendonca (2) drew with Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (Fra, 2); Vidit Santosh Gujrathi (2) drew with Alexandr Predke (Srb, 2); Nihal Sarin (1.5) Yuriy Kuzubov (Ukr, 1.5); Aryan Chopra (1.5) drew with Amin Tabatabaei (Iri, 1.5); Raunak Sadhwani (1) lt to Andy Woodward (Usa, 2); Nils Grandelius (Swe, 1) lt to Aditya Mittal (2); Dmitrij Kollars (Ger, 1) V Pranav (1); SL Narayanan (1.5) drew with Theodorou Nikolas (Gre, 1)
Women: R Vaishali (3) bt Olga Bedelka (Aut, 2); Yuxin Song (Chn, 2.5) bt Vantika Agrawal (1.5); Guo Qi (Chn, 1.5) drew with D Harika (1.5).

Italy rain goals as France start strong

Morocco becomes 1st African side to qualify for WC

PARIS, AFP

Kylian Mbappe. AFP

Gennaro Gattuso enjoyed his start to life as Italy coach on Friday as his team beat Estonia 5-0 to get their 2026 World Cup qualifying campaign back on track, while Kylian Mbappe struck as France began their bid with a win against Ukraine.

A World Cup winner as a combative midfielder in 2006, Gattuso was brought in as coach in June to stop Italy's slide towards a third-consecutive missed World Cup finals.

His tenure started in style as second-half strikes by Moise Kean, Mateo Retegui -- who netted twice -- Giacomo Raspadori and Alessandro Bastoni fired Italy to three points and had fans chanting the coach's name in Bergamo.

Italy are third in Group I after playing three matches and are six points behind leaders Norway, who have played one game more, and boast a superior goal difference. Three points separate Italy from second-placed Israel and the group's play-off spot which is the likelier route for a place in next year's finals in the USA, Canada and Mexico with only first place offering direct qualification.

Israel prepared for Monday's meeting with Italy with a win of their own on Friday as they beat Moldova 4-0 in Chisinau.

Morocco make cut

Morocco trounced 10-man Niger 5-0 in Rabat on Friday to win Group E and become the first African qualifiers.

Ismaeil Saibari scored twice after Abdul-Latif Goumey was sent off and second-half goals from Ayoub el Kaabi, Hamza Igamane and Azzedine Ounahi completed the rout.

A sixth straight victory lifted Morocco to an unassailable lead with 18 points -- eight more than Tanzania -- and sealed a seventh appearance at the global showpiece with two matches to spare.

QUALIFIED SO FAR
- Qualified as hosts: USA, Mexico, Canada
- Asia: Japan, Iran, Jordan, South Korea, Uzbekistan and Australia
- Oceania: New Zealand
- South America: Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Uruguay, Colombia and Paraguay
- Africa: Morocco

Pranavi makes modest start

HOUSTON, PTI: Pranavi Urs of India got off to a fair start in the Individual segment of the Aramco Houston Championship, carding an even par-7 in the opening round at the at Golfcrest Country Club.

Fellow Indians Avani Prashanth and Tvesa Malik shot identical 73s to be tied-56th.

Pranavi, a multiple winner on the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour who has missed a number of events earlier this season, had two birdies against two bogeys in her round.

Annika shines

Annika Chendira once again emerged as the standout performer, winning the second leg of the US Kids Golf India Local Tour at the Classic Golf and Country Club in Gurugram on Sunday.

Max Verstappen. AFP

Verstappen edges McLaren for pole

MONZA (ITALY), AFP

Max Verstappen took pole position for the Italian Grand Prix on Saturday, the reigning Formula One champion giving himself a chance at Monza of slowing McLaren's domination.

Dutchman Verstappen, who has won the last four world titles, will start in the front row alongside Lando Norris who was just ahead of his McLaren teammate and championship leader Oscar Piastri.

Having led for much of Q3, Verstappen snatched back first place in the final seconds of qualifying from Norris, who has been strong this weekend and seemed to have pipped the Red Bull man.

Verstappen completed his rapid last lap in one minute and 18.792 seconds, 0.077 ahead of Norris and 0.190 faster than Piastri, who leads Norris by 34 points at the top of the drivers' standings.

Norris almost missed a top 10 spot on the grid as he sat 11th before his final lap of Q2 sent him through with time already run out.

Ferrari pair Charles Leclerc and Lewis Hamilton were fourth and fifth, although seven-time champion Hamilton has a five-place grid penalty and will struggle to bring any joy to what has been a difficult first season with the Scuderia.

Another home hope, Kimi Antonelli, will start in seventh, one place behind his Mercedes teammate George Russell.

INSCRUTABLE CHINA

India and China meet on the floor. The waltz can wait

Srikanth Kondapalli
The JNU Prof has been Peking behind the Bamboo Curtain for 30 years
@Sri_Kondapalli

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Tianjin to attend the 25th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meeting had triggered widespread expectations on offsetting the damage caused by the United States' 50% tariffs, ushering in a multipolar world, and normalising relations with China stalled since the 2020 Galwan clashes.

The possible outcomes, however, may be limited. To counter the US tariffs, India has to diversify trade (to Russia, China, and other SCO states), exchange in local currencies, sign more preferential free trade agreements, and initiate other measures. However, while Russia agreed to open its markets to Indian goods, China continues to restrict Indian exports through non-tariff barriers. China is also exerting tremendous pressure on India to further open the 400-million consumer base in response to India's desire for stable border regions. Its suggestions on furthering trade are fraught with problems, as trade deficits have already widened to more than $1.5 trillion in favour of Beijing.

As China also faces US tariffs, its export-led economy is suffering, with growth rates plummeting from 10% a decade ago to less than 3%. It needs the Indian market, but does not initiate de-escalation on the border.

Modi did acknowledge that "peace and stability is now in place", in his 50-minute bilateral interaction with President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the summit. However, he underlined the need for "mutual trust, mutual respect and mutual sensitivity" to normalise bilateral relations.

Though Xi stated that both countries should treat each other "as partners and not as rivals", China's actions do not instill confidence in India. For instance, three days after Modi left Tianjin, China and Pakistan reiterated their "all-weather friendship".

Specifically, on September 4, the Sino-Pak action plan for 2025-29 stated that both countries will "deepen defence and strategic cooperation", "closely coordinate in international and regional affairs", and acknowledged "Pakistan's calm approach during the recent conflict in the region" (Operation Sindoor).

During the May 7-10 India-Pakistan conflict, China's weapon systems, such as J-10 and JF-17 fighter aircraft, Hongqi-9 missile systems, and Wing Loong II drones, were extensively used by Pakistan. The Chinese Communist Party-controlled media lampooned Indian weapon systems, specifically the Rafale aircraft. Furthermore, both countries reiterated the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor as the "mainstay" of bilateral relations. China is also financing the $2-billion Karakoram Highway II (Thakot-Raikot) realignment project, which passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

This China-Pakistan joint statement came after Modi's speech at the summit that connectivity issues should not disturb the sovereignty of the SCO member-states. While the SCO summit condemned the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which left 26 people dead, it was watered down by including Pakistan-based incidents such as the Jaffar Express attack, implicitly condoning Pakistan's role in the Pahalgam killings. Over 30 Chinese citizens were killed in Pakistan in recent years, and yet, China wants to deal with this issue at the bilateral or even unilateral levels.

India is also concerned about China's balancing act, even as both sides, over the past 11 months, have seen improved relations. Late last year, China began bifurcating the disputed Aksai Chin into two counties. It announced a road connecting the border areas with India for military mobilisation. Beijing also announced a $167-billion mega dam, triggering concerns downstream in Arunachal Pradesh.

Another issue that attracted global attention to the Tianjin summit was multipolarity. Indeed, since the late 1990s, India, Russia, and China have been at the forefront, pursuing a multipolar world order. However, due to the shifting ground realities, this concept met with differential treatment by the three countries.

China, for instance, pursued close relations with the US, resulting in common postures on global and regional security, counter-terrorism, climate change, energy security, and economic cooperation. The US extending the Most Favoured Nation treatment to China and the latter's entry into the World Trade Organisation resulted in Chinese exports of over $525 billion to the US in 2024, with a cumulative trade deficit of $1.7 trillion in the last two decades in favour of Beijing. It is after the first Trump administration, which began levying tariffs for the first time, that China renewed interest in a multipolar order.

Of course, unlike other countries facing the US tariff heat, such as India, Beijing received a reprieve of 90 days.

Eventually, the Tianjin Declaration "strongly condemned" the US (and Israel) over the attacks on Iran and mentioned 'multipolar world' thrice, even though it was silent on the US tariffs or sanctions. Thus, while the optics at Tianjin may have attracted global attention, it is too early to say what India received from Beijing. Surely, this is not a bilateral meeting, yet it is hard to find actual deliverables.

SARKARI SECRETS

Dead names, ghost voters

For the first time in the history of the world's largest democracy, a large chunk of the voting population is at risk of being disenfranchised. About 65 lakh men, women, and transpersons have been kept out of the draft electoral rolls published under the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in Bihar. We know their names and location, thanks to the pressure for transparency mounted by opposition parties and public-spirited civil society actors through the Supreme Court, on an otherwise recalcitrant Election Commission of India (ECI). These provisionally 'deleted voters' constitute almost 9% of the 7.36 crore registered electors for whom Assembly elections were conducted in Bihar in 2020.

Two men produced before the Supreme Court last month said their names do not appear on the draft rolls because they have been declared 'dead' during the SIR. A week later, two senior nurses of a prestigious government hospital in Delhi stood up amidst an RTI workshop I was conducting there and lamented that their names had also disappeared from the draft rolls. Nobody had bothered to tell them why. Thanks to the Supreme Court's transparency directive, I could advise them to check the 'deleted list', identify the reasons mentioned against their names – 'absent', 'shifted', or 'dead' (ASD) or 'already registered elsewhere', and fill up the appropriate forms to file objections and stake their claim for re-inclusion.

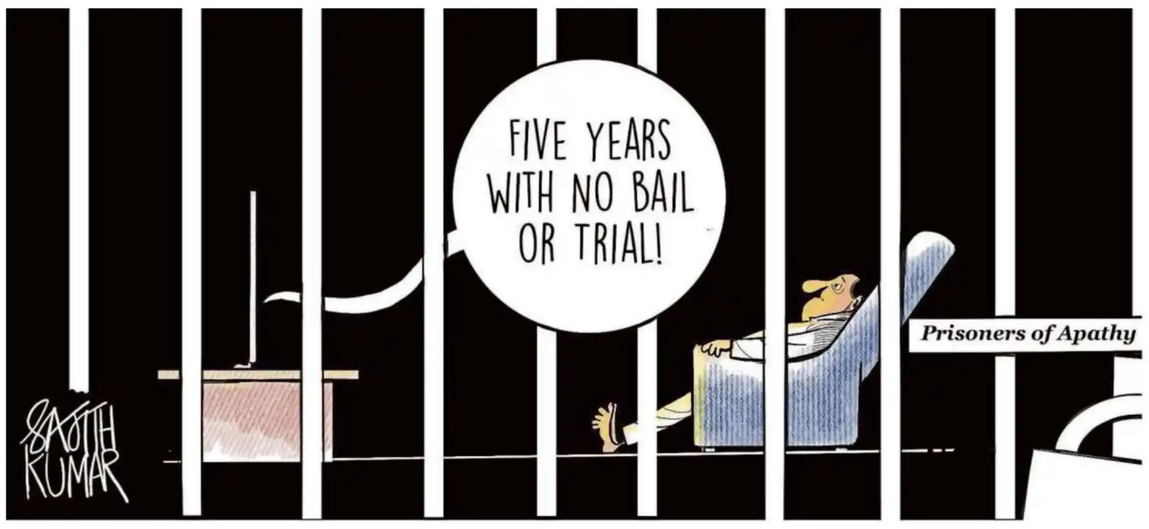
How many people on the 'deleted' list in Bihar will be re-enrolled remains to be seen. But very few people are aware of the legal position regarding the rights of ASD voters. Despite being on the ASD list prepared by the electoral bureaucracy during summary revision exercises, they can vote on polling day. Their votes must also be counted. Of course, they are required to satisfy the Presiding Officer about their identity, with permissible evidentiary documents, to vote in person or through postal ballots. The election laws and rules do not disenfranchise them just because they are on the ASD list.

Venkatesh Nayak
wakes up every morning thinking someone somewhere is hiding something

But how many people on the ASD list successfully cast their vote in every election? Strangely, this is a *sarkari* secret. Even the 2024 Lok Sabha Election Atlas, which the ECI published earlier this year, with much fanfare, is silent about these figures as they are absorbed into the total voter turnout figures for every constituency. According to the ECI's 2023 Handbook for Presiding Officers, polling agents are permitted to bring copies of the ASD list with them for ascertaining the identity of such voters who appear at the polling station, staking their claim. The Presiding Officer not only causes their names to be read out aloud, but also gets their thumb impressions in addition to their signatures on prescribed declaration forms. The Presiding Officer includes data about the number of such voters in the post-poll report, which the constituency's Returning Officer (RO) scrutinises the very next day. The Chief Electoral Officer sends a consolidated scrutiny report for all constituencies to the ECI. But the ECI has not proactively published this segregated ASD voter data in recent memory.

RTI interventions in Karnataka last year revealed that even the scrutiny mechanism does not function with any degree of uniformity. The Uttara Kannada Lok Sabha constituency's scrutiny report noted that in five polling stations, more than 10% of the ASD voters had cast their vote, but did not mention the total turnout. In Hassan, only 104 of the 22,659 voters on the ASD list for the entire constituency had voted, but there was no mention of such polling stations. In Dakshina Kannada, absentee voters' data was absorbed into the figures for government servants who had used the postal ballot as they were on election duty. The scrutiny report of the Chikkaballapura constituency did not mention the ASD category at all. Most of the other ROs either rejected my RTI applications or maintained a studied silence. The constituency-wise Index Cards containing summary polling data, which the ROs send to the ECI after the results are declared (which I obtained through RTI), absorb ASD voter data into the category of postal ballots.

It remains to be seen if the Bihar SIR exercise eliminates the need for maintaining an ASD list altogether. But wherever ASD lists are used at the polling booth, data about such voters must be reported separately. These figures will be useful for deciding election petitions that allege ghost voting. More importantly, what procedures were followed before deleting the 65 lakh names in Bihar? I am awaiting RTI replies from the ECI and the CEO.



THE DIGITAL ALARMIST

Big Tech is bad news for news

If you are curious about what is really happening in Gaza, you cannot possibly rely on the internet or the major media outlets to find out. You need to be there, on the ground, but good luck trying to convince Israel to permit you to travel to the war-torn region. Dozens of journalists have been killed by Israeli defence forces, if only to prevent the truth from getting out. Why kill the messenger if the message is not to your liking? There is precedence to all of this.

The run-up to the Iraq war was inundated by fake news created by intelligence agencies and faithfully reported in major newspapers with global reach, such as *The New York Times* – lies that were parroted by presidents, prime ministers, and assorted politicians at the United Nations. This was long before Facebook, X, and other social media made their debut on the international scene. With the advent of OpenAI, I expect this to get even worse during the coming years. If Israel's NSO group can hack into journalists' phones, why not anyone's phone? And why stop at hacking when journalists can be killed at will by drones whose targeting software is written by a whole host of IT companies in the US, Israel, and elsewhere.

It is highly unacceptable that IT companies are rarely held responsible for the unintended consequences of their innovations, especially the constitutionally guaranteed right to vote in democratic countries. Don't the authors of these innovations think of the consequences before marketing them to the public? Most troubling of all is Donald Trump's recent threat, under the guise of protecting free speech, to penalise countries that try to rein in American IT companies for their monopolistic practices and spreading disinformation. Trump's primary targets are the EU, India, and Brazil.

IBM's motto for decades has been a single word: 'Think'. But was IBM really thinking when the company permitted its technology to be used to automate the bureaucratic processes for enforcing apartheid in South Africa, identifying those of Jewish extraction in Germany for subsequent extermination, identifying mixed-race individuals on the island of Jamaica for forced sterilisation, or using secret CCTV footage of New York City residents to improve their facial recognition technology's ability to discriminate based on skin colour? Now, its CEO, Arvind Krishna, wants to replace thousands of human workers with AI. In an interview with *Bloomberg*, Krishna stated that up to 30% of IBM's back-office jobs could be replaced by AI, based on comparative costs and productivity of people and AI.

Roger Marshall
is a computer scientist, a newly minted Luddite and a cynic

The people most affected by IT company decisions cannot fight back since IT companies are authoritarian, not democratic. Moreover, these companies cannot be taken to court since company-client disputes have to be resolved through arbitration as per the terms of service crafted by the companies themselves.

Big Tech has a history of discriminatory treatment, overt or covert (through algorithmic bias), of people of colour and other marginalised groups, quelling dissent amongst their workforce by banning unions, and killing off their competitors by purchasing or co-opting them. *The Washington Post*, for example, is now owned by Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon. "I'm excited we'll have the opportunity to include award-winning journalism from *The Wall Street Journal* – and other US News Corp properties – in our news tab," said Meta's CEO, Mark Zuckerberg. The Murdoch family, media barons across three continents, owns News Corp, which includes *Fox News*, the most rabid right-wing TV channel to dominate the airwaves in recent memory.

India, too, has its own version of *Fox News* with millions of followers. Diverse opinions are no longer to be found in most major newspapers, be they published in the US, UK, EU, or Australia, and, now, India. Dissent has become equated with terrorism, as can be seen in the prosecution of pro-Palestinian activists on terrorism charges.

Google has rebranded itself as "an AI-first company" in a world where "AI and its benefits have no borders". Meta, likewise, has announced plans to make its generative AI programmes available to the public as open-source software. Both IT companies conveniently neglected to mention generative AI's role in spreading disinformation during election campaigning and becoming the defining story of any election in any country. Like meat, one man's free speech is another man's poison. We should all be vegetarians.

OUTSIDE

Wellspring of the light within

Light we take to be an outsider, so that no adjective needs to attach itself to it like a title. Not its marital status, not an honorary degree like a doctorate, no declaration of profession or pedigree. We know its source – whether it's 150 million kilometres away or the Pavlovian reaching out for a switchboard to enable seeing as soon as we enter a dark room, we know that it's outside us. Occasionally, only a few times in our lives, we allow ourselves an adjective to clarify its location: 'inner' light, that thing without a switchboard or rotational movements that cause it to disappear, like how sunlight behaves on earth. It might even outlive us, as histories and hagiographies of the wise and saintly tell us. Whether this 'inner light' travels in straight lines like the rays outside us do we don't know. That it doesn't push up the bill on an electric meter we are sure.

Whatever the nature of the outside, the human expectation is for it to be well lit. It's only a matter of scale and intensity – it could be heaven, temperate, perhaps Mediterranean, where all is outside, sun, sand, shore, sea, their sense and Celsius; it could be hell, hotter, fiercer, crazier, more importunate, simultaneously dry and tropical – but we should be able to see it. That's the one condition we set in our negotiation with the outside. With our inside, where there is no sun or moon or kerosene lamp, where we have to believe that there are residential colonies of kidney and heart and lungs without being able to see them, there is a different relationship with light. Since no light enters these places, there can be no shadow either.

To such an intuitive understanding of our biology comes the confusion of Milton's 'The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a hell of heaven...' What is the architectural unit of the things we construct inside our mind? Inch, foot, yard, gaz, cottah? What is the electrical wiring in these places like – exposed or concealed? These questions, ridiculous as they might seem, come only because we struggle to find the source of the lamp that produces this thing that is praised as 'inner light' or 'inner glow'. Where is this electric transformer? Is this 'inner light' a customised thing, or is it like LED lamps manufactured industrially?

Sumana Roy
is an author and poet. Her books include *How I Became a Tree* and *Provincials*

The halo is the interstitial thing that connects this inner light with the muscles of the outside. Every religion seems to have a version of it: male gods, with these cloud-like attachments to their heads, so that one feels sorry for them and even worries for them, how they sleep with those lights on; women, allowed this inner light much later, only the pure and pious; infants, their inner light erupting from the tips of fingers or the eyes, their glint. Strange – and slightly comic – it is then that gods with so much inner light needed men to light lamps and candles for them to tide through their unending lives, guiding them through the darkest nights of the year and, occasionally, the mornings, as part of the rituals of obeisance and acknowledgement of their presence. Were the lamp and the candle a stand-in for the men (and women) of inner light?

Is the difference between the light outside and 'inner light' about the character of light itself? We can't see light from the sun or moon accumulate, though it often seems to us that it does, like cream does on the skin of cooling milk. Is inner light like sedimentary stone, an inevitable accretion of years and lifetimes, the reason painters from various schools and cultures, while trying to communicate the experience of its radiance, have turned to the sheen of the sky, its age, or rather the sky's agelessness? What about shadows, then? I'm not only thinking of the equivalent of those that travel with us as we move and meet the world, that disappear when light dies temporarily, I'm also thinking of what Jung called the 'inner shadow'. Rabindranath Tagore, that most ardent worshipper of light, in "*Alo aamar alo ogo*...", perhaps his most well-known song on the subject, writes about both these kinds of light – the light on the flowers and leaves, butterflies and streams, the field and the clouds, the outside, but also the light of praan and hriday, life, its vital energy, and the heart. I suppose these are the 'inner' equivalents of the torchlight, searchlight, and the lighthouse?

CULTURE AND COSMOS

Deepfakes and weaponised porn: A case for cultural reckoning

Shaifali Sandhya
is an international psychologist, former professor, and writer on culture, cosmopolitanism, and global affairs

When Babydoll Archi appeared online – pouting in a scarlet sari and a pink blouse – she captivated 1.4 million overnight. But Babydoll Archi was not real. She was a deepfake – a sexually-explicit persona engineered from a single photograph of a woman – by an embittered ex-lover who targeted her with revenge porn, unleashing the grotesque fantasies of millions. But deepfakes don't flourish *just* because technology exists; their strongest driver is the cultural context where women's safety and dignity are undervalued.

In India, where about 31,000 rapes are reported annually and 1 in 3 married women faces spousal violence, deepfakes find fertile ground. In such contexts, intimacy is often entangled with domination, and fantasy is mistaken for desire, shaping how women ought to be coveted. Deepfakes that digitally graft women's faces onto nude bodies are a form of digital patriarchy. They strip women from humans into consumable images and from subjects of affection into objects of conquest. They expose the perilous slip to degradation, amplifying the violence women and children live with daily.

The crux of the matter isn't whether pornography is harmful to women; the answer is yes. The question is: how do we navigate the treacherous waters when the lines between desire and violence blur? As AI churns out content at breakneck speed, the anonymous thirst for novel women is projected to increase by 35% over the next five years, outpacing efforts at regulating it; 98% of its targets will still be women.

This does not mean that all pornography is toxic. When consensual and respectful, it can foster healthy sexual expression. Some argue – since 41-54% of 13-20 year olds can discern deepfakes – that greater exposure to deepfake pornography will breed skepticism. But the reality is that many fall prey to its deception, mistaking manipulated images as authentic, with dire consequences for young minds grappling with their perceptions of relationships and consent. Even those who recognise deepfakes as fake may weaponise them by sharing, ridiculing, or engaging in online mobbing, compounding harms.

The science is: violent pornography fosters toxic beliefs, heightens the risk of sexual violence, and normalises hostility towards women. When porn aggressive to women is consumed in high-misogyny contexts, it catalyses their debasement and makes it difficult for women to escape abusive relationships. Violent fantasies, especially those fuelled by misogyny, are predictive and potent risk factors for real-world sexual aggression.

As a psychologist, I have treated women affected by violations such as molestation, rape, and incest who carry scars like shame, panic, and the corrosive belief that their personhood can be rewritten by others. Survivors describe deepfakes as re-traumatisation, an echo of earlier nonconsensual experiences, where wanting is, in fact, taking. For women, this dynamic does more than endanger them physically – it can trap them in cycles of abuse and vulnerability.

While other countries are advancing legal remedies, India's failure is rooted not in technology but in history. The US Supreme Court upheld age-verification laws for websites, and the UK's Online Safety Act mandates age checks on adult content. India's lag can be located in the weight of history borne by its women. Colonial and caste histories normalised the control over women's bodies, granting upper-caste men unchecked access to lower-caste women. AI industrialises these abuses: doxxing and mock auctions of Muslim women like Sulli Deals reproduce the dynamics of domination and fear on a global and permanent scale.

Legislative measures alone will not be enough; a significant cultural reckoning is necessary to dismantle the dehumanisation of women. It can prompt questions about our complicity, such as: What does it mean to consume pornography in a world where women's identities can be maliciously reconstructed and sold as fantasies?

The Information Technology Act, the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, and the Digital Personal Data Protection Act provide limited remedies, although none criminalise deepfake nudes. Future remedies may include: ensuring verified access within a traceable ecosystem; incentivising platforms to remove non-consensual images with haste; establishing fast-track cybercrime courts; creating dedicated benches to ensure that trials finish within six months to minimise the trauma associated with prolonged litigation; and implementing accountability measures for online platforms.

It is not enough to hold the creators accountable but to ask soul-searching questions of ourselves: What does it mean to be a consumer of porn in an age where women's faces are stitched into fantasies without consent? Much like it did to the real Archi, deepfakes destroy a woman's confidence and mutate the sexual act into one of her debasement.

Deepfake porn collapses the line between *looking* and *doing harm* to women. When anonymity becomes an engine of violence, it dissolves women's humanity into performance, collapses intimacy into a spectacle, and reimagines them as consumables. In this sense, to watch is not only to witness – it is to wound.

Riding through the teen storm

You can't steady your teen without first steadying yourself. Parenting teenagers through midlife stressors requires self-regulation and empathy. Dr Sujata Kelkar Shetty emphasises the emotional resilience parents need to support teen mental health without exhausting themselves in the process

Sujata Kelkar Shetty

We spend endless hours worrying about our teenagers — their exam stress, their social media habits, their mood swings. However, we rarely turn the spotlight on ourselves, the parents navigating this beautiful yet chaotic phase right alongside them.

Parenting a teen is a high-wire act performed while we ourselves are often juggling midlife challenges: ageing parents, career pressures, and our own changing health. We are expected to be the calm, steady anchor, but who anchors the anchor? This is the heart of resilient parenting: showing up for your teen means you must first learn to show up for yourself.

Understanding the 'Ferrari Brain'

To parent resiliently, we must first understand what we're working with. My research has taught me that the adolescent brain is like a high-performance Ferrari — all engine, power, and potential, but with brakes that are still under construction. The prefrontal cortex, responsible for judgement, impulse control, and foreseeing consequences, is the last part to mature fully, not until the mid-20s.

Meanwhile, the amygdala — the emotional and reactive centre of the brain — is in the driver's seat. This isn't a design flaw; it's what fuels their passion, creativity, and courage to eventually leave the nest. But it also explains the exasperating impulsivity, the emotional storms, and the perplexing inability to remember to take out the trash despite a dozen reminders.

When we understand this, our frustration transforms into empathy. Our teen's distraction isn't a personal slight against our parenting; it is a neurological reality. Our role shifts from being a disciplinarian to being a co-pilot, helping them navigate until their own internal GPS is fully wired. This knowledge is liberating — it allows us to depersonalise their behaviour and respond with strategic calm instead of reactive panic.

The power of co-regulation

You cannot regulate a dysregulated nervous system from another dysregulated nervous system. This is the science behind the old adage, "calm yourself first."

Our teens' brains are highly attuned to our emotional states — a process called co-regulation. When their amygdala is firing, triggering fight-or-flight, our number one job is to ensure our own prefrontal cortex remains online.

This means when your teen slams his door after a frustrating day, your most powerful move isn't to engage immediately. It is to take a deep breath, perhaps in the kitchen, and activate your own parasympathetic nervous system. Only from that place of calm can you then knock and say, "I'm here when you're ready to talk."

By modelling emotional regulation, we literally offer our calm as a template for their developing brains to download. We are not just teaching resilience; we are biologically transmitting it through our presence.

From manager to consultant

Resilient parenting requires a fundamental identity shift: from manager to consultant. In childhood, we manage their schedules, their meals, and their playdates. In adolescence, this management becomes a cage, inciting rebellion and stifling the independence they are hardwired to seek.

Our new role is that of a trusted consultant. We are on call, our expertise is valued, but we are not running the company. This means asking, "What's your plan for studying for that physics test?" instead of dictating the study schedule. It means letting them fail a small quiz and then helping them analyse what went wrong, rather than preventing the failure altogether. This is how they build self-efficacy — the unshakable belief that they can handle life's challenges. Our job is not to clear the path for them, but to have faith in their ability to navigate the obstacles, with us safely in their corner.

Parenting my 18-year-old taught me a crucial lesson: adolescence doesn't happen in a vacuum. In our case, his teenage years unfolded against the backdrop of our own midlife challenges. My husband and I were hitting our professional peaks just as we began dealing with the declining health of our parents.

I vividly remember those exhausting days. After navigating work deadlines and frantic calls to geriatric doctors, I would then have to switch gears completely to address the needs of a silent, sullen teenager who had just had a bad day at school.

Sustainable parenting

Megha Sekhsaria Mawandia, a counsellor and founder of Triyoke, perfectly articulated this for me: "The village that shows up when children are young disappears when they become teenagers. And parents are simply exhausted—they just don't have enough juice to give."

We are human. We get tired, irritable, and overwhelmed. Acknowledging this is not a sign of failure; it's the first step toward sustainable parenting. Our teens don't need perfect parents. They need real ones — parents who can model how to handle stress, admit mistakes, and prioritise well-being.

When my older son was in the thick of his teen years, I often found myself listening to respond, not to understand. I was ready with solutions, advice, and occasionally, dismissals like "You'll get over it" or "This isn't a big deal." It took me time to understand that what he needed most was not a fixer, but a witness.

Active listening is the cornerstone of connection. It means:

1 Putting your phone away: The simple, physical act of giving your teen your undivided attention signals that they matter.

2 Listening for feeling, not just fact: Behind the story about a friend's betrayal or a teacher's unfairness is a feeling of hurt, anger, or injustice. Validate that. Try saying, "It sounds like that made you feel really angry. I get that."

3 Asking open-ended questions: Instead of "How was your day?" (which invites a "fine"), try "What was the most interesting thing you learned today?" or "Tell me about something that made you laugh."

4 Resisting the urge to solve: Often, our role is to simply hold space. The most powerful question you can ask is, "Would you like my advice, or do you just need me to listen?"

This kind of listening builds a bridge of trust. It tells your teen that their inner world is safe with you, making it more likely they will come to you when the bigger, scarier issues arise.

What to look out for

The key is to watch for changes in baseline behaviour. These are not one-off bad days, but persistent shifts that last weeks. Be alert to:

1 Social withdrawal: Pulling away from friends and family, abandoning hobbies they once loved.

2 Changes in sleep and appetite: Sleeping too much or too little; a significant loss or gain of weight.

3 Academic decline: A sudden, unexplained drop in grades or loss of interest in school.

4 Expressions of hopelessness: Phrases like "I can't do anything right," "No one would care if I were gone," or "I just want to give up."

5 Increased irritability: Anger and frustration that seem disproportionate to the situation.

These can be triggers for underlying mental health issues like anxiety or depression. Ignoring them, hoping it's "just a phase," is a gamble we cannot afford. Half of all serious adult psychiatric conditions begin in the teen years. Early intervention is everything. Your first port of call should be your paediatrician, who can guide you to a qualified therapist or counsellor.

> When your teen slams his door after a frustrating day, your most powerful move isn't to engage immediately. It is to take a deep breath, perhaps in the kitchen, and activate your own parasympathetic nervous system.

You cannot pour from an empty cup. This is not a cliché; it is a physiological fact. Parenting from a place of exhaustion and depletion helps no one. When we are burned out, we become reactive, short-tempered, and emotionally unavailable — the exact opposite of what our teens need.

Don't forget to take care of yourself!

Self-care is not selfish; it is strategic. It is how we ensure we have the emotional and physical reserves to be the parents we want to be. This isn't about lavish spa days (though those are nice!). It's about consistent, small acts of replenishment:

1 Meet your physical needs: Prioritise 7-8 hours of sleep. Move your body for 30 minutes—a walk in any local park counts. Eat foods that fuel you, not just fill you.

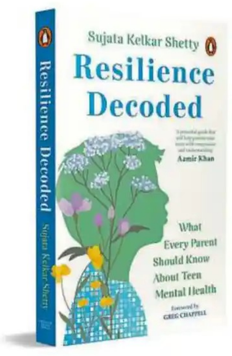
2 Meet your emotional needs: Schedule time with friends who fill your cup. Don't repress emotions; a good cry can be as cathartic as a deep laugh.

3 Meet your intellectual needs: Keep learning. Read a book outside your field, listen to a podcast, or pick up an old hobby. A stimulated mind is a resilient mind.

I schedule my weekly yoga session as inflexibly as I schedule a doctor's appointment. It is my sacred time to reset. By prioritising my well-being, I am not taking away from my sons; I am investing in my ability to be present for them.

The author is a clinical research scientist who has been researching, writing and speaking on resilient living for the past 15 years. She has a PhD in Toxicology from the University of Kentucky, Lexington. Her post-doctoral work at the NIH was on the mind-body connection. Her book, Resilience Decoded, was recently published by Penguin.

DH ILLUSTRATION: SAJITH KUMAR



Key workables for the resilient parent

1 The 5-minute check-in: Dedicate five phone-free minutes each day to each teen. No agenda, no lectures. Just be present.

2 Validate first: Before offering solutions, always acknowledge the emotion. "I see you're upset," or "That must have been so frustrating."

3 Schedule worry time: If your teen is an overthinker, agree on a 15-minute "worry time" each day to discuss anxieties. This contains the anxiety to a specific time rather than letting it dominate the whole day.

4 Model self-compassion: Let them hear you say, "I really messed that up, but I'm going to try again tomorrow." Show them that failure is part of learning.

5 Build your village: Find one or two trusted friends with teens you can talk to without judgement. Venting to them protects your teen's privacy and gives you support.

Parenting a teenager is perhaps the ultimate practice in resilient living. It demands our patience, our presence, and our own constant growth. It is messy, humbling, and utterly beautiful. By tending to our own well-being, listening with our full hearts, and staying lovingly alert, we do more than just manage their adolescence. We build an unshakable foundation of trust and strength that they will carry with them long after they've left our homes, ready to face the world not because they never fell, but because they learned, with our support, how to rise.

MIXED BAG

'Mixed Bag' is your Sunday potpourri — an assortment of snappy articles, engaging ideas and snackable nibbles about this and that, from here and there. Dip in!

A rare smell on the brink of extinction

In a shoebox-size gallery with hot pink walls in lower Manhattan, a hushed crowd had assembled around a woman as she was methodically opening an obelisk-shaped box. They watched in fascination as the woman pulled a tall glass flask from the box, containing what looked like a saffron-coloured potion. One that, you could say, promised to conjure Elizabeth Taylor.

The potion was a re-creation of an obscure perfume once worn by Taylor. It was concocted by Marissa Zappas, 38, an accomplished perfumer and the woman who unboxed the fragrance at an opening event for 'Her Scent of Mystery', a new exhibition at the Olfactory Art Keller gallery in Chinatown.

The show, running through September 20, takes its name from 'Scent of Mystery', a 1960 film that briefly features Taylor, who makes an uncredited cameo in its final shot.

Mercilessly panned — including in *The New York Times* — the movie famously incorporated a then-futuristic technology called Smell-O-Vision, which involved a clanking metal box with a bronchiole-like network of pipes being installed in a theatre. As 'Scent of Mystery' played, the machinery would hiss odours in accordance with its scenes. When the villain smoked a pipe, for instance, gusts of tobacco-scented air hit the audience.

Another aroma associated with the movie, and the centrepiece of the new exhibition, is the sharp, spicy fragrance made for Sally Kennedy, the character played by Taylor. But the film flopped. In recent years, only one bottle of the promotional 'Scent of Mystery' perfume was known to exist. It belonged to Susan Todd, whose father, Mike Todd Jr, was a producer of the film.

Enter Zappas. She was tapped to re-create the perfume. To remake the 'Scent of Mystery' perfume, which had a formula incorporating 60 raw materials, Zappas conducted a form of chemical analysis known as gas chromatography-mass spectrometry. Her version is a near replica of the original, but has both fewer ingredients and some careful additions, like bergamot (to enhance the perfume's citrusy opening) and a deft touch of powdery talc.

Head-binding for a leg-up?

Parents have been meddling with their children's heads, if not their minds, since prehistoric times. To achieve the desired forms — flat, round, conical — the pliable skulls

A mid-19th-century painting by Paul Kane depicts a woman with a child whose head is being reshaped. NYT PIC

of newborns were typically either wrapped tightly in cloth or bound between boards. The origins of this practice, known as artificial cranial deformation, have been traced to early *Homo sapiens* in Australia about 13,000 years ago, and, amid some scholarly contention, potentially to Neanderthal populations 45,000 years ago. In the region that is now Peru, early inhabitants apparently believed that a sloping forehead was an advantageous feature, with the earliest evidence dating back to the fourth millennium BC. In his new book, 'The Mountain Embodied', Velasco details the cranial modification traditions of the Collaguas and Cavanas, neighbouring peoples that lived in the Colca Valley of highland Peru.

Velasco's book argues for a shift toward understanding it from the perspective of the people who practised it. "Dr Velasco's book pushes against the colonial invention that head shape was a mere ethnic marker," said Andrew Scherer, an anthropologist at Brown University. In his book, Velasco argues that the practice of head-binding contributed to social disparities and was a mark of wealth.

NYT

FEEDBACK
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ASTROSPEAK
Guruji Shrii Arnav

Scan the QR code to read the ***weekly horoscope***

This genre-bending book, written with the blazing honesty that Elizabeth Gilbert, the bestselling author of Eat Pray Love is known for, has its faults but is still worth a read, says Sheila Kumar

Love, actually, frankly

Gilbert talks about the perils of co-dependency, substance abuse, and living on the streets with messy candour. (PIC FOR REPRESENTATION)

This is a tribute, a memoir, a self-help manual all rolled into one. It's written with the blazing honesty and startling vulnerability that Elizabeth Gilbert, the bestselling author of Eat Pray Love, is known and loved for by millions of fans.

Gilbert, in this reviewer's opinion, is going for a Love Story (the cult classic by Erich Segal) vibe, then veers off the path strewn with rose petals to give us a close look at her tumultuous relationship with her partner, Rayya Elias, right till the latter's death from liver and pancreatic cancer.

There is no ambiguity about the tribute Gilbert pays to someone she loved with all of her heart, first as a dear friend, then as a romantic partner, then as someone who could and did wreak havoc in the author's life, now as a 'god of her understanding' to whom she turns often, asking for help, succour and advice from the deceased soul, and what's more, convinced she's getting feedback of some sort from beyond the grave.

Years ago, Gibert went to Rayya who was a hairdresser of Syrian origin to get her hair done; captivated by the woman's molasses laugh, her candour, her junkie-for-ever-attempting-to-get-on-the-straight-path lifestyle, Gilbert stayed by Rayya, with Rayya for years, right till she had walked the latter all the way down to the river, all the way to the woman's painful and difficult death. En route, she set Rayya up in a church converted into a house, bought her all sorts of luxury gifts, indulged her, and revelled in the deep bond they had between them.

Elizabeth Gilbert (PIC COURTESY: WIKIMEDIA)

There is a flinching edge to the memoir angle of this book. Gilbert tells us that she is a sex and love addict who went into a 12-step recovery programme but didn't stay to finish it. She holds a mirror to her addiction, to her yearnings, to how she coped with the downsides of the relationship with Rayya when the Syrian quit her own rehab and went back to dope and drink.

Fully knowing she might well earn the disapproval of some of her fans, Gilbert spills the tea on some unsavoury details, like how she looked the other way when her partner hit her addictions again, scaling it up incrementally and damagingly, packing their shared apartment with narcotics.

Where the self-help angle enters is when the author takes readers through some parts of her rehabilitation programme for her sex and love addiction, then does the same with some of what is prescribed for Rayya regarding both her cancer and her junkie habit.

In the 'let it all hang out' style now familiar to Gilbert's readers, she shares everything, or almost everything, putting every weakness, every hesitant step forward, every backslide out there on the page, even as she underlines just what the results of these actions are.

The advice is plentiful on how to get out of the negative impact of one's own addictions, as well as of those caused by others' addictions.

Rayya Elias' wild past as an ex-convict, an on-off junkie and drug dealer, someone who lived many years of her life in the streets, Gilbert's own battles with co-dependency, neediness, dope, all will strike chords with those who scrape the bottom of the barrel similarly, those looking up for support, guidance, a way out, any way out.

The story of 'a pair of untreated addicts on a slow collision course' walks the border between tender and maudlin at times.

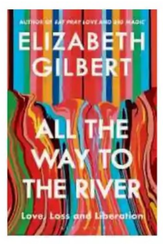
Since the book begins with a visitation by Rayya some five years after her death, the reader is made well aware that they will be taking this journey to the water's edge with Gilbert, with Rayya. The text is interspersed with poetry and rough sketches. The language is contemporary, direct, gentle, but firm.

To this reviewer, most times the book read like Elizabeth Gilbert's diary jottings. And all through, it was more tell than show.

Then again, the way Gilbert links the book's title to her act of staying with Rayya all the way till the latter died, how she uses New York City streets as a metaphor for friendship, how, at the end, she tells Rayya people's stories, and her brief meditation on the nature of death are all neat pieces of writing.

We're both walking a brave path here,
I have to be brave enough to die,
And you have to be brave enough to live.

Although her characteristic in-your-face style might appeal to some readers, and her tips might even help those in recovery from addictions, this personal growth story, which might have been inchoate in the hands of a less talented writer, is still not high literature. Just so you know.



ALL THE WAY TO THE RIVER
Elizabeth Gilbert
Bloomsbury, pp 384, Rs 699

THE HERITAGE SHELF

Why the future needs its classics

Translating Indian classics meets urgent cultural needs, be it preserving pluralism or grounding the next generation in a rich, shared tradition

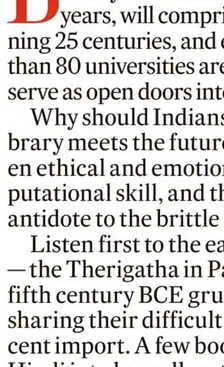
By the end of 2025, the translation series, a project undertaken by the Murty Classical Library of India (MCLI), which has just completed 10 years, will comprise 50 bilingual volumes drawn from 14 languages spanning 25 centuries, and edited by dozens of scholars around the globe; more than 80 universities are involved as well. Those numbers read like statistics but serve as open doors into our past.

Why should Indians step through? A civilisation that knows its own library meets the future without cultural stage fright. The classics strengthen ethical and emotional intelligence as coding boot-camps build computational skill, and the record they preserve is spectacularly plural — an antidote to the brittle simplicities that masquerade as nationalism.

Listen first to the earliest voices. Poems of the First Buddhist Women — the Therigatha in Pali — let today's teenager overhear nuns from the fifth century BCE grumbling about jackfruit, yearning for enlightenment, sharing their difficult choices. Feminist candour, it turns out, is not a recent import. A few books along sits Sur's Ocean, where Surdas turns Braj Hindi into boundless tenderness, imagining god as a mischievous child even Krishna's mother cannot manage.

Spiritual pluralism deepens in Punjab and Sindh. Sufi Lyrics shares Bullhe Shah's ecstatic Punjabi refrains, while poems from the Sikh Sacred Tradition gather hymns from Guru Nanak, each insisting the divine ignores the fences humans raise. A reader moving between them learns — without a civics lecture — how this sacred tradition champions a language of universal love and critiques hate as a basis for spiritual understanding.

Epic imaginations prove equally many-voiced. In The Sea of Separation, Tulsidas retells the Ramayana as an Awadhi love poem stretched across a cosmic ocean; The Kannada Mahabharata offers a unique lens on the epic, emphasising Krishna's wisdom and critiquing societal structures, but ultimately culminates in the inevitable and tragic Kurukshetra War; Kalidasa's Lineage of the Raghus pauses mid-hunt so a king can spare a frightened doe. Each version remixes a shared pool of story. Tomorrow's engineers and filmmakers who splice myths with science fiction will merely be extending a classical habit. Imagination wanders further in Theft of a Tree, a 16th-century Telugu caprice where a lovelorn god uproots paradise for his bride. Pair it with God at Play, a Marathi chronicle of wandering saints who debate metaphysics at roadside shrines, and with Mir Taqi Mir's Urdu Ghazals, whose self-mocking urban voice could headline any open-mic night. Future song-writers, stand-up comics and game designers will find proof here that Indian languages have never lacked irony or interstellar whimsy. The shelf also houses tough lessons in power. Eight monumental volumes of Abu'l-Fazl's History of Akbar record how an early-modern empire tried to turn pluralism into policy: censuses, provincial audits, debates among Jesuits, Jains and Shia clerics. Read beside the Sanskrit Yajnavalkya Smrti, where law is argued clause by clause, the chronicle shows a tradition of evidence-based governance long before the phrase existed. Business schools seeking case studies could start here rather than in Silicon Valley.



For sceptics, there is Ten Indian Classics, a tasting menu that places Pali nun, Persian historian, Prakrit romance, Kannada trickster and Urdu lyric in one slim volume. What can all this give a century psyched for AI and space? These books train the social faculties algorithms cannot emulate; they remind inventors that risk and wonder are native instincts; they hold alternative blueprints for community, power and desire. Leave the shelf unopened, and the next generation inherits a thinner vocabulary for thinking about freedom or beauty. Read it — better still, argue with it — and young minds grow elastic, confident, resistant to dogma.

MCLI began as a publishing project, but it has become a wager on cultural confidence. Fifty volumes in, 90 years to go. If teachers add one title to a syllabus, if grandparents gift one at a birthday, if a line of Sindhi or Sanskrit slips into a pop song, the wager will pay off. Then, on the library's 100th birthday, a child will browse a catalogue and think: of course these are my books, as natural as Shakespeare, as necessary as the morning news. Classics are not relics; they are engines. Fed with attention, they generate the imaginative power a republic needs.

APARNA KRISHNAN AND ROHAN MURTY

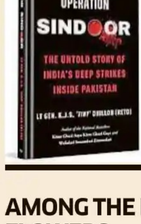
The Heritage Shelf *is a new monthly column from the Murty Classical Library of India, published by Harvard University Press, presenting India's greatest literary works and the enduring traditions that shaped them. This is the introductory article.*

BOOKRACK

THE PRETENDERS
Avtar Singh

S&S, pp 320, Rs 599
Set across Asia at the peak of the brutal Delta wave, this is a novel about finding love, freedom and human connection even in the bleakest of times.

HONEY, A GLOBAL HISTORY
Lucy M Long



Macmillan, pp NA, Rs 599
The author, a folklorist and food scholar, details how this 'nectar of the gods' has featured in politics, religion, economics and popular culture around the world for centuries.

REFUGE
Sunny Singh
Footnote, pp 208, Rs 399

Spanning both decades and continents, this book turns its lens on those who are often overlooked in war stories: women and children, not to forget soldiers.

OPERATION SINDOOR
Lt Gen KJS 'Tiny' Dhillon
Penguin, pp 248, Rs 499

This promises to be a definitive account of India's decisive military response to Pakistan-backed terrorism told by one of India's most respected Army commanders.

AMONG THE BURNING FLOWERS
Samantha Shannon

Bloomsbury, pp 260, Rs 599
A story of human resilience in the face of dire circumstances, this novel leads readers through the gripping and tragic events that pave the way for the opening of the million-copy bestseller The Priory of the Orange Tree.

The unsung patriot who fought like a lion

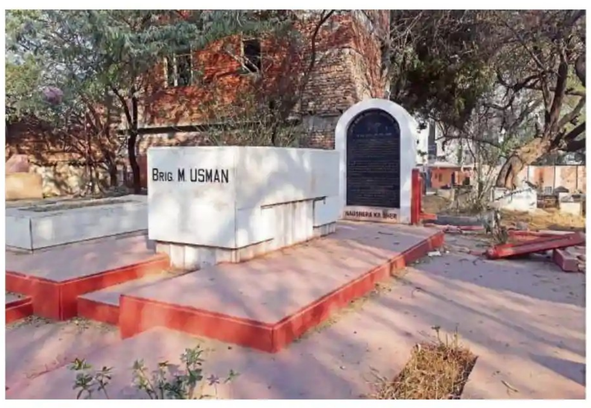
This book is more than a biography of a brave soldier; it is an affirmation that patriotism transcends religion, writes Stanley Carvalho

In 1948, India captured two strategic locations in Jammu & Kashmir — Jhangar and Naushera — all due to the leadership of a senior officer of the armed forces who fired on all cylinders during combat.

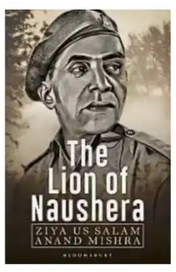
The officer was Brigadier Mohammed Usman, a selfless, brave soldier who gave his life for the country. What's strikingly admirable is, at the time of Partition, he rejected Pakistan's lucrative offers — the highest rank in their army, money and power — to remain in India, the land of his birth. "Love for India burned bright in Brigadier Usman's heart, and everything Pakistan offered appeared to pale in comparison."

This book by two senior journalists is more than a biography of Usman; it is an affirmation of the pluralist democracy of India, a telling reaffirmation that patriotism transcends religion. "The eyes of the world are on us ... We must not falter; we must not fail them ... India expects everyone to do his duty." The book opens with those stirring lines of Usman's special order just before the 1948 capture of Jhangar and Naushera, embodying the spirit of a man who earned the sobriquet 'The Lion of Naushera'.

The narrative, in six parts, takes the reader on a captivating journey, dating back to 1912 when Usman was born, from his brief but extraordinary life to the heroic legacy he left behind. Woven into the story are historical, military and familial facts and insightful nuggets. Some rare photographs and newspaper clippings enhance the book's appeal.



Brigadier Mohammad Usman's tomb in the Okhla Qabristan near Jamia Millia Islamia campus in New Delhi. (PIC COURTESY: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS)



THE LION OF NAUSHERA
Ziya US Salam & Anand Mishra
Bloomsbury, pp 148, Rs 399

Born on 15 July 1912 in Bibipur in Mau district of Azamgarh division in Uttar Pradesh to a high-ranking police officer and a homemaker mother, Usman rebuffed the family's wish to be a civil servant, opting instead to join the army.

He attended the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst before joining the army in 1935, rising through the ranks rapidly. Usman came to be known as a man who would stand up not only in front of the enemy but also for his jawans.

The book delineates the tumultuous years of 1947-48, the violence and repeated incursions in Jammu & Kashmir by Pakistan and its capture of Jhangar.

Usman vowed not to sleep on a bed till he recaptured Jhangar and Naushera, which he accomplished in three months. But when he foiled Pakistani attempts to capture Jhangar again, he died in a 25-pounder shell attack on 3 July 1948, just 12 days before his 36th birthday. "I am dying, but let not the territory we were fighting for fall for the enemy," were his last words.

He received a state funeral with Prime Minister Nehru, his entire cabinet and the three chiefs of the armed forces in attendance.

Usman remains the highest-ranking military officer to be killed in combat. He was awarded the Maha Vir Chakra posthumously for his valour.

Significantly, Usman went on to become an abiding icon of secularism for a nation often questioning its own identity. Here was a sterling example of a man who took great pride in his motherland, sacrificing his life for the nation. His life decries the sectarian jibes of "*Babur ki aulad*" (Babur's progeny) or "*Aurangzeb ki aulad*" (Aurangzeb's progeny). Usman's followers reminded the divisive elements that they would be better off calling other Indians "*Usman ki aulad*" (Usman's progeny). Ironically, Usman, who remained single, had no children.

Another sad irony is that Usman hailed from the Azamgarh area, which earned a dubious reputation after the 2008 Batla House encounter in Delhi. The two terrorists allegedly responsible for the attack are also said to be from the same region. However, as the authors rightfully point out, the region also produced for independent India a martyr who gave his life fighting Pakistan.

The book highlights how Usman's rare heroism and sacrifice have been ignored by filmmakers. Some attempts were made, but they fizzled out either due to the absence of a heroine or the reluctance of Bollywood to cast Muslim men as patriotic heroes.

In these fraught times of divisiveness and communalism, this authentic and painstakingly researched book has not only rescued a largely forgotten hero from the mists of history, but it also serves as a powerful reminder that people of all faiths, castes and regions fought for India's independence and to protect its borders.

READ OF THE WEEK

Progress is power. But our modern story of progress is a very dangerous fiction. In the pursuit of progress, of growth and expansion, we have levelled cities, flattened mountains, charted the globe and ushered in a new geological epoch unique in our planet's 4.5-billion-year history. The idea of progress has compelled societies toward exploration, invention, and grandiosity on one hand, and on the other, genocide, slavery, ecocide, and conquest: it is the root of our civilisation's success, as well as its looming demise.

Geographer Samuel Miller McDonald offers a radical new perspective on the myth upon which the modern world is built, illuminating its blood-strewn lineage and suggesting an urgent alternative. He traces the history of how human societies broke from their pasts, broke from their environments, and broke from longstanding egalitarian values that sustained them, supplanting these with one imperative to rule all others: progress. If humanity is to have any chance of a future, then we must fundamentally change the way we think about one of our most basic political ideas.

Samuel Miller McDonald is a geographer focusing on human ecology, theory, and history. He holds a doctorate from Brasenose College, University of Oxford and degrees from Yale University and College of the Atlantic.

Women entrepreneurs are leading the charge in upcycling, blending innovation and sustainability to address India's growing waste crisis, writes Sharmila Vaidyanathan

Recycling, upcycling & REVOLUTIONISING

Shikha Shah and Madhu Shah of ScrapShala.

Elizabeth Yorke of Saving Grains.

Aditi Jhala of The Misfits.

Amita Deshpande of reCharkha.

Bhavini Parikh of Bunko Junko.

For Shikha Shah, based in Varanasi, the idea of upcycling is deeply ingrained in her life. As a child, she watched her mother creatively repurpose empty shampoo and perfume bottles into plant holders and works of art, subtly fostering a sense of waste awareness in the household. Later, as an environmental sciences student, Shikha realised that her mother's small, creative efforts were, in fact, practical lessons in building a sustainable lifestyle.

"This was back in 2017, and I could see an increasing interest in sustainability," Shikha reflects. "I thought my mother's work could be showcased to a larger audience, helping to spread the message of repurposing waste."

Her first initiative was simple. She collected discarded beer bottles and asked her mother to transform them into artistic pieces using paint and design. Shikha shared images of these creations on social media and even displayed them at exhibitions across the city. "We sold about 60% of the items and received a lot of positive feedback," she recalls. This success prompted her to formalise the initiative.

That same year, Shikha launched ScrapShala, a platform where local artists upcycle waste into useful products like table organisers, bags, door hangers, and incense sticks. These products are sold on the website, and the startup has managed to prevent over 2,00,000 kgs of waste from entering landfills. ScrapShala even featured in the popular business reality show Shark Tank India.

A new era of waste solutions

Across India, women entrepreneurs are leading the charge in upcycling, confronting the nation's mounting waste crisis through innovation and awareness. India generates over 1,70,000 metric tonnes of solid waste daily, and despite the 2016 implementation of the Solid Waste Management Rules, inefficient waste management has led to problems like air and water pollution. Moreover, communities living near the country's sprawling landfills face increasing health risks.

Bhavini Parikh, founder of Bunko Junko, a Mumbai-based venture, shares her perspective: "I spent over three decades in the fashion industry, but only later did I realise that textile waste was a major issue in India." Bunko Junko upcycles fabric scraps and offcuts into fashionable garments and accessories. Statistics show that India accumulates 7,793 kilotonnes of textile waste every year, a figure that shocked Bhavini when she first encountered it.

When she started Bunko Junko in 2019, many customers were unfamiliar with the concept of upcycling. "The younger generation is more aware today, but people still need to understand the scale of textile waste," she says. "Pre-consumer waste, fabric discarded before manufacturing, is essentially as good as new cloth. People need to embrace these materials more openly."

Recognised as the first upcycled textile manufacturer by India's Ministry of Textiles, Bunko Junko has also gained membership in the United Nations Fashion and Lifestyle Network. Bhavini's efforts have rescued over 36,000 kgs of textile waste, contributing significantly to reducing the environmental impact of the fashion industry.

Creations at ScrapShala.

Waste not, want not

For Aditi Jhala, founder of The Misfits, a food startup based in Jaipur, upcycling began as second nature. Growing up, her mother used every part of fruits and vegetables, from peels to stems, teaching Jhala to waste nothing. "That mindset stayed with me," she says.

Since its launch in May 2024, The Misfits has upcycled over 250 kgs of vegetables, saving more than 30,000 litres of water. The food industry's post-harvest losses are staggering: between 6.02-15.05% for fruits and 4.87-11.61% for vegetables. Yet, Aditi points out, perfectly edible produce is often discarded simply because it doesn't meet market standards for appearance.

"Upcycling food is a powerful way to rethink how we value our produce," says Aditi. "A slightly overripe mango or a carrot with leafy tops can be transformed into delicious, nutritious dishes that are good for both the planet and our health."

Meanwhile, Amita Deshpande, founder of reCharkha, a Pune-based initiative, is turning discarded empty chip packets into stylish bags and pouches. "It takes about 30-40 packets to make a single bag," Amita explains. "We use the *charkha* (spinning wheel) to address the problem of multi-layered plastic packaging, which is hard to recycle. We're also creating jobs for rural women, having provided over 70,000 days of livelihood so far."

A product from The Misfits.

Good Flour by Saving Grains.

Since reCharkha's inception in 2015, over four million plastic wrappers and bags have been upcycled. However, Amita stresses that while upcycling offers a temporary solution to the plastic crisis, it is not the ultimate answer. Globally, only 9% of the plastic waste is recycled while the rest ends up in landfills or gets incinerated. She emphasises that the priority should be reducing plastic consumption, not relying solely on recycling or upcycling efforts. "Upcycling can only go so far. The true solution lies in avoiding plastic altogether," she says.

Funding challenges in the upcycling sector

Upcycling ventures, though impactful, face significant challenges, particularly when it comes to securing funding. Elizabeth Yorke, founder of Saving Grains, a Bengaluru-based initiative that upcycles spent grain from the brewing industry into food products, shares her experience. "The novelty of upcycled products makes it hard to attract funding," she says.

Despite the sustainability aspect, Elizabeth found that funding agencies frequently told her there was no market for products made from spent grain. "The challenge is not only creating the products but also building a market for them from the ground up," she explains. Currently on a production pause to focus on product development, Elizabeth is also involved in a government-funded research project that explores upcycling agricultural and food industry by-products.

Shikha echoes similar sentiments, saying that securing funding that aligns with ScrapShala's values and vision can be both complex and time-consuming. "We're a small, impact-driven organisation, and we'd rather devote our energy to creating sustainable solutions than getting caught up in lengthy funding processes," she says.

A reCharkha bag.

Navigating social & gender norms

Running a startup while navigating India's social expectations, particularly those placed on women, adds yet another layer of difficulty. Shikha notes that resilience, a clear vision, and a strong support system are essential for overcoming these barriers. "It's tough to juggle all these expectations, but it's the clarity of purpose and support from others that keeps us moving forward," she reflects. Despite these hurdles, entrepreneurs like Shikha, Bhavini, Aditi, Amita and Elizabeth remain unwavering in their commitment to upcycling and sustainability. Their efforts, although often facing financial and social challenges, are steadily contributing to a larger shift in how India and the world approach waste and resource management. With every project, every product, and every story shared, they are turning waste into wealth, one piece at a time.

A Bunko Junko vest.

Travel

Ranjan Pal journeys through Australia's South-West, uncovering a land of lush forests, ancient cliffs, rolling dunes and untouched beaches

Adventures on the edge of the Indian Ocean

Even for most Australians, the South-West coast of the country remains a place few have visited. Perth holds the distinction of being the most isolated major city in the world, as it's a five-hour plane ride from Sydney. That is unfortunate, because this secluded corner of Australia boasts some of the most amazing seascapes, stunning sunsets, lush natural forests and great opportunities for adventure.

Margaret River exploration

Our local guide, a rangy, fast-talking character with trademark Aussie banter and a dry sense of humour, had us hooked from the start. Bundled into a 4WD, we set off eagerly. Abruptly, the vehicle turned off the highway and dived into the bordering eucalyptus forest, heading deeper into the tall stands of jarrah, karri and marri trees that block out the sunlight. We bumped along the rough trail until the driver brought the vehicle to a halt beside a clump of canoes cleverly hidden in the undergrowth.

We pushed a green metal canoe into the Margaret River, little more than a flat, shallow stream here, and drifted downstream. At times, we could see straight through to the bottom and the weeds, rocks and branches that broke the surface of the calm water. The paddling was easy, and it was a sparkling fall day with the sun shining brightly overhead as we wound our way slowly downriver. The guide pointed out freshwater Carter's mussels clinging to the banks — a key indicator of pristine water conditions — and we even spotted a couple of local marron (freshwater crayfish), black as coal to camouflage themselves as they scuttled among the submerged rocks.

The 4WD plunged into yet another rough track and halted on a sandy patch. Right in front of us was the famous Cape-to-Cape Track, Australia's longest coastal walk, stretching 135 km between the lighthouses at Cape Leeuwin and Cape Naturaliste. We scrambled along the rough trail, which cut through coastal heath and climbed the rocky outcrops at the top of the Wilyabrup Cliffs.

The guide gestured to the horizon, exclaiming that, "it was mind-boggling to imagine these cliffs had once been fused with the landmass of India 100 million years ago." The panorama was breathtaking — the vast expanse of blue ocean gleaming in the setting sun, stretching to the horizon, with white breakers and pristine beaches below.

In the distance, a pod of dolphins dived and surfaced gracefully as they hunted, their movements marked by distant splashes.

Pemberton adventure

The next day, we drove another 135 kms to Pemberton, rounding the tip of South-West Australia to face the great Southern Ocean. After a quick stop for croissants and coffee at a local bakery, we piled into a spacious Toyota Hi-Ace bus converted to 4WD for the day's adventure. Our driver-guide turned off onto a rough bush trail, and we plunged into tall stands of eucalyptus trees in Warren National Park. Once deep in the forest, we walked along the trail like Lilliputians in the land of giant karri trees that towered above us like a gang of Gullivers. Several tree trunks were blackened, and the guide explained that rangers have begun controlled burns to clear undergrowth and regenerate the forest. The trail sloped down to the Warren River, a shallow, placid stream meandering through lush undergrowth, wildflowers and colourful fungi. For the adventurous, there was even a climb to the top of the world's highest fire lookout tree, using 182 iron pegs hammered into its trunk.

Our next stop was D'Entrecasteaux National Park, stretching 130 kms along the South-West coast with long white beaches, rugged limestone cliffs, wetlands and karri forests. Bemused by the elegant French name, I learned from the guide that it honours the French admiral who explored this remote corner in 1792. We strolled along a curved boardwalk that stretches 30 metres into Yeagarup Lake, a peaceful freshwater lake (its name translates as "Place of Wandering Spirit"). Before our next challenge, the tyres of the 4WD were deflated to adapt to shifting terrain.

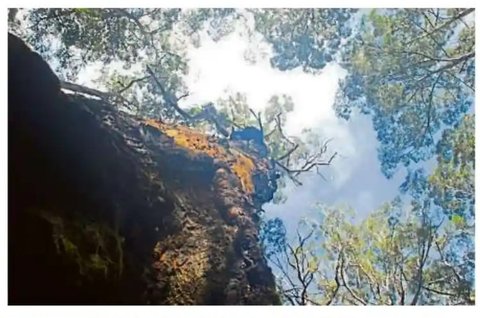
Soon, we faced a giant wall of sand. The engine gunned as the bus powered forward, keeping low gear to grip the soft surface. The exhilarating ride ended atop the Yeagarup Dunes, a unique system of mobile sand dunes in the middle of the karri forest. Covering 30 sq km, the dunes move inland at 4 km a year, slowly swallowing forests and wetlands. The landscape was surreal — like Lawrence of Arabia set amid a tropical Heart of Darkness. A little further, the trail opened onto a magnificent panorama: the pristine white sands of Yeagarup Beach stretching in both directions, with the vast blue expanse of the Great Southern Ocean beyond. The guide shouted above the engine noise, "We always leave the best till last! No matter how many times I visit, the beauty of this place still takes my breath away." We had the beach entirely to ourselves as the 4WD raced along the sand to the Warren River mouth.

Here, the full power and glory of Nature became apparent. As if escaping the turbulent sea, waves jostled in a race to shore, breaking in foam and froth. Channels appeared in the sand and vanished just as quickly. Even as we watched, the point where the river met the sea shifted and reshaped itself. I was utterly captivated by this awe-inspiring seascape — a powerful reminder of the impermanence of nature and life itself.

Note: Travellers can choose from several licensed tour operators in the region, who ensure safe and comfortable access to these extraordinary landscapes.

Final stop at Warren River mouth on Yeagarup Beach.
IMAGES COURTESY PEMBERTON & MARGARET RIVER DISCOVERY TOUR

Drone view of the Margaret River.



Eucalyptus trees tower above us.

It feels surreal driving over the Yeagarup Dunes.

Paddling on the Margaret River.

Cliffside walk on the Cape-to-Cape track.

A flock of fairy terns on Yeagarup beach.

EDIBLE OMENS

From the misty Andes to Irish Halloween tables, cultures across the globe have long turned to food and drink as tools for divination, where every sip or bite reveals a secret, discovers Raul Dias

In a world where the veil between the tangible and the mysterious is often gossamer-thin, food and drink have long been used as portals to the unknown. Not merely nourishment for the body, they whisper secrets, divine destinies, and forecast fates. Across continents and centuries, edible rituals have woven themselves into the mystic arts of divination, making kitchens and teacups places of prophecy.

Tea leaves & whispers

As many fortune-telling rituals do, it all begins with a warm cup of tea. The ancient art of tasseography, or tea leaf reading, is perhaps the most enduring of these food-based auguries. Originating in the courts of imperial China and perfected in the parlours of Victorian England, this divination practice involves swirling loose tea in a cup, drinking it with intention, and studying the soggy remnants that remain. A clump might resemble a serpent, hinting at deceit. A circle? Completion. A heart? Love is imminent. There is something undeniably romantic about the idea that our future lies submerged in a simple cup of Assam or Earl Grey, waiting for the right eyes to bring it to light.

In the Scottish Highlands, tea reading was once considered the domain of the "cunning women" who doubled as midwives and soothsayers. Folklore abounds of such women predicting shipwrecks and surprise pregnancies based solely on the dregs in a cup.

Grounds for fate

Venture to the bustling *bazaars* of Istanbul or the elegant cafés of Vienna, and you'll discover the equally captivating ritual of Turkish coffee reading. Known as *fal*, this form of fortune-telling is practised after sipping the thick, sludgy brew. The cup is overturned onto a saucer, left to cool, and then interpreted by a reader. One might see an eagle swooping — a sign of victory. Or a tree taking root, a symbol of new beginnings.

In many Turkish households, it is common to end dinner parties with a round of *fal*, often accompanied by laughter, gasps, and the occasional unnerving prediction. Coffee, in this instance, becomes more than an after-dinner digestif; it becomes a medium through which the universe speaks, one granule at a time.

Bread, brack & bewitchment

Travel northwest to Ireland, and you'll find that fortune hides in flour-dusted folds of barmbrack, a dense, spiced fruit loaf served around Halloween, or Samhain as the ancient Celts called it. Traditionally, bakers hide symbolic trinkets within the dough — a ring, a coin, a rag, a pea. Each has its own portent: the ring for impending marriage, the rag for poverty, the coin for wealth, and the pea for spinsterhood. Families gather, slice into the loaf with trepidation, and pull out their pieces — each bite a glimpse of the year ahead.

In more superstitious pockets of rural Ireland, it is still considered bad luck to refuse a slice of barmbrack at Halloween, lest you anger the spirits lingering at the threshold between the living and the dead.

The Andean oracle

Thousands of miles away, amid the cloud-kissed peaks of the Andes, coca leaves hold more than medicinal value. Used for centuries by Quechua and Aymara shamans, the ritual of coca leaf reading is sacred. After an offering and a quiet prayer to Pachamama, the Earth goddess, the reader casts a handful of the matte-green (and mildly narcotic) leaves onto a woven cloth. Their patterns are analysed with great care. A cluster near the top may reveal good news; leaves turned upside down might warn of illness or danger.

These readings are deeply entwined with indigenous cosmology, often performed before major life events, be they marriages, journeys, or harvests. Here, nature's bounty serves not only to heal but to herald.

Feasts of fortune elsewhere

In Greece, on New Year's Day, families slice into a *vasilopita*, a sweet, yeasted cake named after St Basil. Hidden within is a coin. Whoever finds it in their slice is blessed with luck for the year. Similarly, in parts of Eastern Europe, fortune-telling cookies, not unlike the Chinese versions popular in American restaurants, are baked with handwritten fortunes tucked inside.

In Armenia, young women used to partake in a ritual involving *aghablit*, a flour and water paste placed under their pillows on St Sarkis Day. That night, their dreams were said to reveal the face of their future husbands.

Even our more everyday rituals hold echoes of these old beliefs. Consider the way we blow out birthday candles and silently wish. Or the Western tradition of breaking a chicken or turkey wishbone at Thanksgiving, tugging each side in hopes of snagging the "lucky" bit. These acts are secularised remnants of ancient divinations, still whispering old truths in new guises.

Stirring the cauldron

In many ways, food and drink offer the perfect vessels for fortune. They are intimate, consumed with trust, shared with others, and often imbued with ritual. In stirring a pot or sipping from a cup, we slow down, focus, and open ourselves to interpretation.

Whether guided by mysticism or metaphor, these traditions persist not because they predict the future with precision, but because they give meaning to the unknown. They are mirrors held up to our inner selves, cloaked in cloves and caffeine.

So the next time we cradle a warm brew, break bread with loved ones, or crack into a confection, we might find that the future is closer than we think. It could be whispering from the bottom of our cup or nestled inside our cake, just waiting to be tasted.

Fortune-telling traditions across cultures. AI-GENERATED IMAGE

Wellness

Ayurveda, rooted in rhythm and balance, offers simple, personalised practices that complement modern medicine and nurture long-term well-being, writes Nidhi Bhanshali Pandya

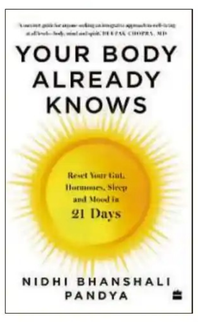
Inner balance

A common misconception is that Ayurveda cannot be integrated with modern medicine. In reality, Ayurveda can work alongside conventional treatments, often enhancing their effectiveness and supporting the body in minimising side effects, such as detoxifying the liver from over-medication.

Nidhi Bhanshali Pandya

Today, more than 70% of global deaths are linked to chronic, lifestyle-related illnesses such as irritable bowel syndrome, hormonal imbalances, autoimmune conditions, and mood disorders. These conditions rarely appear suddenly. They are the cumulative result of long-term habits — irregular sleep, inconsistent eating, sedentary behaviour, and prolonged stress.

Ayurveda, India's holistic and time-honoured health system, originated over 5,000 years ago. It offers a framework to understand how small daily choices can build up into a disease. According to Ayurveda, imbalance develops in stages. What begins as a minor disturbance in the *doshas* can, over time, deepen into illness unless addressed early. The good news? If disease arises from consistent disconnection, then consistent, conscious action can also help reverse it.



Small, intentional changes can unravel the causes of illness and reintroduce ease into the body. Ayurveda emphasises prevention and early intervention. Early signs of imbalance — digestive discomfort, fatigue, insomnia, or mood changes — are viewed as the body's signals. Addressing them through dietary, behavioural, and lifestyle adjustments is seen as the path to long-term health. Ayurveda meets you where you are: the path back to wellness is not about restriction or punishment, but about rhythm and kindness.

The role of rhythm in health

A central principle of Ayurveda is living in sync with circadian rhythms — the natural 24-hour cycles that regulate sleep, digestion, and hormones. Modern research in chronobiology and neuroplasticity supports this, showing that repeated behaviours can reshape brain function, hormonal balance, and overall well-being. Studies suggest that around 21 days of consistent practice may help form new neural pathways, a concept highlighted by neuroscience researcher Dr Joe Dispenza.

Ayurveda prescribes daily routines (*dinacharya*) such as rising early, eating freshly prepared warm meals, maintaining consistent meal times, limiting late-night activity, and sleeping before 10 pm. These practices are designed to support digestion, hormonal health, and nervous system stability.

Understanding the "Inner Climate®"

While not a classical Ayurvedic term, I use "Inner Climate" as a fresh lens inspired by Ayurveda, honouring the unique internal environment each of us carries. Rooted in Ayurvedic ideas of the *doshas* and the interplay of body, mind, and energy, this climate is shaped by everything — from the food we eat to the thoughts we hold. It echoes Ayurveda's core principle: health is not fixed, but a shifting balance, much like the modern scientific idea of homeostasis.

Rather than isolating symptoms, Ayurveda reads the climate that produces them. If the inner climate becomes too dry, hot, or heavy, disturbances arise — digestive issues, fatigue, irritability, or anxiety. These are not random problems but signs that the body's internal environment is off balance. Ayurveda works to restore harmony through personalised interventions that address the whole system. This approach places the individual at the centre of their own healing. Interestingly, it mirrors how modern medicine now studies factors such as gut microbiota, inflammation, hormone signalling, and metabolic function.

An ancient system with modern resonance

Ayurveda is not a one-size-fits-all system. It emphasises personalised care, seasonal adjustment, and preventive strategies focused on long-term balance rather than quick fixes. Unlike some modern wellness trends built on restriction or rigid rules, Ayurveda encourages self-awareness and adaptation.

Critics point out that more clinical studies are needed to validate Ayurvedic treatments in modern contexts. Still, several practices — such as turmeric for inflammation, mindfulness for stress reduction, and circadian-aligned eating — are increasingly supported by scientific research.

Five Ayurvedic habits for everyday balance

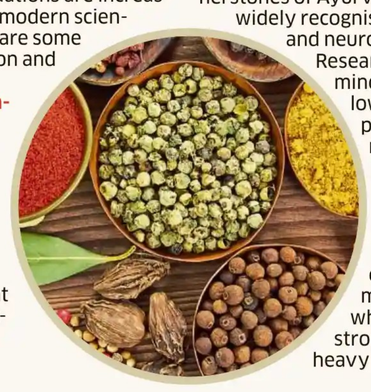
- **Rise with the sun:** Align your waking hours with natural light to support circadian rhythm and mental clarity.
- **Eat warm, fresh meals:** Prioritise freshly cooked food over leftovers or processed items; it boosts digestion and energy.
- **Mind your meal times:** Eating at regular times helps regulate metabolism and hormone balance.
- **Digital sunset:** Reduce screen exposure after dusk to encourage deeper sleep and calmer nervous system activity.
- **Seasonal self-care:** Adjust food and routines with the seasons – lighter meals in summer, and foods to keep the body grounded in winter.

WHERE SCIENCE MEETS AYURVEDA

While Ayurveda is rooted in ancient wisdom, many of its recommendations are increasingly supported by modern scientific research. Here are some areas where tradition and evidence meet:

- **Turmeric & inflammation:** Ayurveda has long used turmeric as a healing spice. Modern studies confirm that curcumin, its active compound, has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, supporting joint health and immunity.
- **Mindfulness & stress reduction:** Meditation and breathwork, cornerstones of Ayurvedic living, are now widely recognised in psychology and neuroscience. Research shows regular mindfulness practice lowers cortisol, improves focus, and reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression.
- **Circadian-aligned eating:** Ayurveda advises eating the main meal during midday, when digestion is strongest, and avoiding heavy dinners. Chronobiology studies now show that early meals improve metabolism, reduce blood sugar fluctuations, and promote better sleep.
- **Gut health & digestion:** The Ayurvedic principle of agni (digestive fire) underlines the importance of strong digestion for overall health. This aligns with modern microbiome research linking gut balance to immunity, mood regulation, and chronic disease prevention.
- **Yoga & breathwork:** Daily practices like asana (postures) and pranayama (breathing techniques) support flexibility, lung function, and stress resilience.

Clinical trials have demonstrated benefits in conditions ranging from hypertension to respiratory disorders.



Ayurveda reminds us that healing is not only about removing disease but about nurturing balance, resilience, and a deeper connection to life's rhythms.

(The author is an Ayurvedic doctor who recently published Your Body Already Knows with HarperCollins India.)

Walls that sing, art that speaks

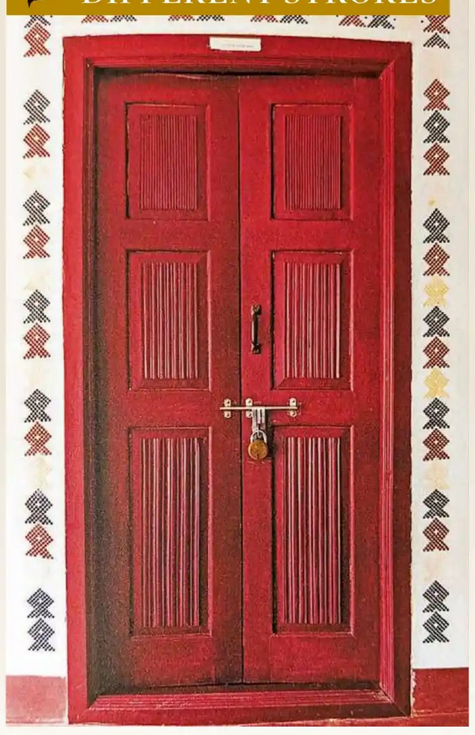
A new book seeks to give a voice to the Deevaru women artists whose creativity and dedication have kept the Chittara art form alive, says Giridhar Khasnis

Cultural diversity is integral to Indian design. With its myriad ethnic groups, languages, and landscapes, it creates a vibrant tapestry of traditions, aesthetics and creative practices. Traditional decorative patterns awash with bright colours, geometric shapes, and symbols reflect the skills, wisdom, and imagination of various communities and artists. While contemporary designs often blend traditional elements with modern styles, challenges persist in safeguarding, preserving, and sustaining this rich and age-old cultural heritage.

"Chittara is a rural art that adorns walls," wrote Na D'Souza, praising the Deevaru women as true artists of chittara, a wall painting craft from the Malenadu region of Karnataka. D'Souza (1937–2025) was a well-known writer who passed away earlier this year. Having had a deep understanding of the region, its evolution, transformation, and people's struggles, he centred much of his literary and social work in and around the Sahyadri. A great admirer of Chittara art, he even encouraged the artists to draw mythological stories, which were later published in magazines.

Deevara Chittara: The Artform, the People, and Their Culture (Prism Books, Bengaluru/2025 /200 pages/Rs 5,995), a coffee table book, explores this unique and living tradition sustained by the Deevaru women. It documents the various facets of the art form, its intricacies, symbolism and evolution. Geetha Bhat, founder of The Centre for Revival of Indigenous Art (CFRIA), known for her long-standing work in promoting crafts, is the force behind the research on Chittara art and the publication of the book. She has organised national and international exhibitions and shared her research outcomes at conferences.

DIFFERENT STROKES

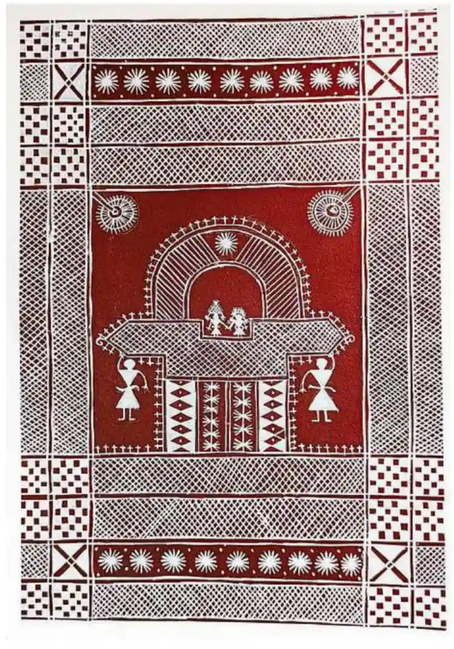


A Chittara pattern adorns a door.

(Top & left): Some of the intricate designs showcased in the book. Pics courtesy: Prism Books

Intuitive understanding

In her introduction, Bhat reflects on her 20-year journey and connection to Deevaru's rich traditions and their eco-friendly practices. "The Deevaru's profound relationship with nature is integral to Chittara, as evidenced by the use of natural colours and brushes." While the intuitive understanding of geometric principles that Deevaru women use to create stunning art and crafts is fascinating, Bhat is concerned that the living tradition and its generational wisdom are poorly documented. "This book captures the central role that Chittara plays in the lifestyle, traditions, and culture of the community. It gives a voice to the artists — the Deevaru women — whose creativity and dedication have kept this art form alive."



The book is divided into six sections: *Badukina Choukattu* (The Framework of Life); *Jeevanada Amruta* (Water-The Elixir of Life); *Bhoomi Thayiya Seemantha* (Celebrating the Fullness of Mother Earth); *Dodda Habbada Sambhrama* (A Time for Gratitude); *Samruddha Suggi* (A Bountiful Harvest); and *Chittaarada Pragati* (A Way Forward for Chittara).

Each chapter provides readers with revealing facts and sharp insights. It traces the Deevaru community's evolution from forest dwellers to tenant farmers and eventually landowners (due to the 1974 land reforms). "Chittara was born out of the need to control external evil forces," writes H C Boralingaiah, Chairman of Karnataka Janapada Parishat. "The Deevaru use Chittara to express the relationship between man and woman, prosperity through harvest, and their deep connection to nature."

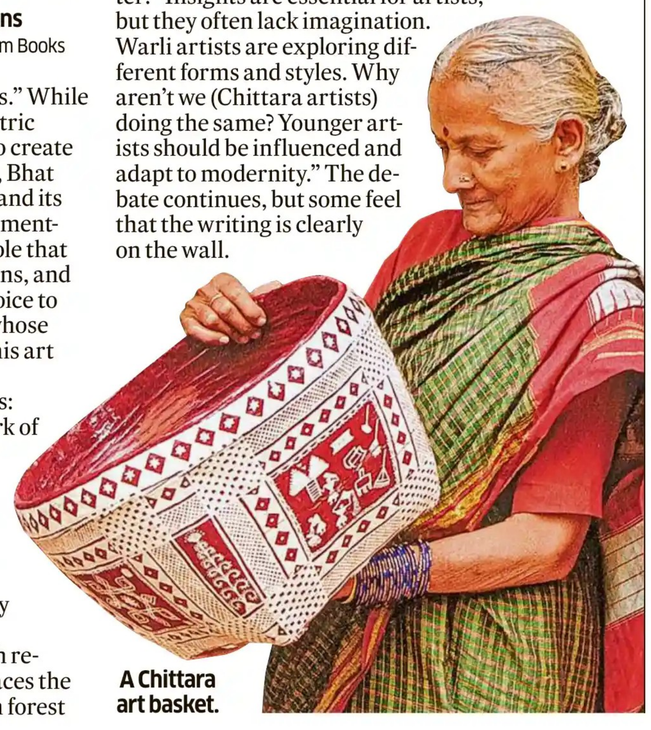
Striking visuals

The Chittara has evolved into a communal art form passed down through generations. Primarily created by women, the wall paintings reflect the community's collective wisdom, while serving as a source of joy, beauty, and creativity for the artists. The book details how Chittara artists transform blank spaces — on walls, floors, cloth, wood, or baskets — into stunning visuals using simple materials and techniques. The artists' arithmetic skills are evident in the perfectly aligned patterns and borders of the artwork, which are illustrated throughout the book. One also learns how the colours (primarily red, white, black, and yellow) are derived from natural sources like soil, rice, stones, grains, seeds, and leaves.

Despite its rich heritage, Chittara art has faced challenges due to changing times, evolving tastes, and a lack of governmental support. The book acknowledges that several years ago, when Chittara was nearly extinct, it was a combination of Na D'Souza's writing and the efforts of Huchappa Masther (who trained numerous artists) and Heggodu Prasanna (who showcased Chittara murals in Desi and Charaka outlets) that revived this art form.

This publication is a visual delight. It presents a wide variety of Chittara designs and shows the artists at work and at rest. It captures the essence of village life, including sounds, scents, rituals, materials, and cultural activities of the community. With colourful photographs by Smitha Tumuluru and design by Namrata Cavale, the book offers a visual and aesthetic appeal to the reader-viewer. While academically robust, it is also accessible to a general audience. A charming aspect of the publication is the brief but evocative profiles of key practising Deevaru artists.

The book also gives a hint about whether Deevaru artists should stick to tradition or embrace change. Na D'Souza bats for the latter: "Insights are essential for artists, but they often lack imagination. Warli artists are exploring different forms and styles. Why aren't we (Chittara artists) doing the same? Younger artists should be influenced and adapt to modernity." The debate continues, but some feel that the writing is clearly on the wall.



A Chittara art basket.

POT POURRI

Archiving the Sindhi hustle

An online repository of Sindhi ads captures the community's journey, its spirit of enterprise and reveals its cultural roots, writes Savitha Karthik

There are multiple lenses through which to understand the history of a people, ranging from literary fiction to photography, from diaries to official documents. What if you were to look at a people through the lens of advertisements published in books and magazines of a certain timeframe? Soni Wadhwa, Assistant Professor, Liberal Arts Department of SRM University, Andhra Pradesh, chose to do just that.

Soni Wadhwa

Soni came into possession of a private collection of books in the Sindhi language, belonging to Parmanand Ghanshyamdas, a Mumbai-based educator and supporter of Sindhi literature. She built an online archive of the books, called the PG Sindhi Library (https://pgsindhi-library.sanchaya.net/). The books are accessible to anyone interested in Sindhi literature. In the process of looking at the books and magazines, Sonu was also drawn to the advertisements they included. The ads were mostly given out by proprietors of small businesses from the Sindhi community. Most of them have a "with best compliments from" tagline, suggesting that they contributed to the costs of publishing. The ads are a reflection of the entrepreneurial spirit of the Sindhi community post-Partition and serve as a people's history.

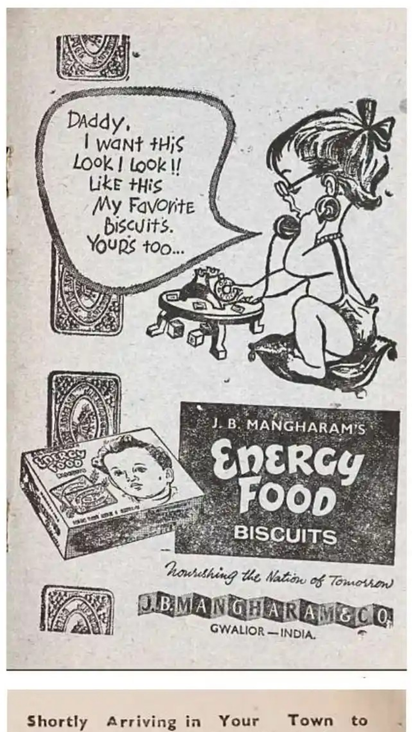
The advertisements that Soni culled from various books and back issues of 'Halchal' magazine are part of the online Sindhi Halchal Archive (sindhihalchalarchive.in) that she has set up exclusively for the ads.

The name is a hat-tip to the magazine, published by the Sindhi Sabha Western Railway, from which she has collated a majority of the ads. 'Halchal' also seemed like an apt name because it suggests activity and hustle — qualities that one may notice in the Sindhi businessperson, Soni explains.

The Ulhasnagar connection

Post-partition, the Sindhis who migrated to India were a scattered community spread across the country, including Mumbai and the rest of Maharashtra, parts of Rajasthan and Gujarat. Ulhasnagar, which was a Sindhi refugee camp, now a thriving township in Thane district, became well known for entrepreneurship —it was where many Sindhis set up and grew their businesses. "The wealthy and greedy or stingy Sindhi businessman was a stereotype perpetrated by Hindi cinema. Growing up, I saw that very few people knew who Sindhis were because they had probably not met one," Soni observes.

And yet, jokes and stereotypes around Sindhis stuck. There was the "Made in USA" (Ulhasnagar Sindhi Association) label that alluded to the means Sindhi businesses used to push their products. However, it is important to see the contexts and understand if these allusions were indeed true in all cases," Soni says, explaining how a businessman busted the myth that Sindhi businesses used "low quality or fake labels" and said that it was often marketers from elsewhere who asked these Ulhasnagar businesses to compromise on the quality of raw materials to increase their profit margins.


Daddy, I want this Look! Look!! Like this My Favorite Biscuits. Yours too...
J. B. MANGHARAM'S
ENERGY FOOD
BISCUITS
Nourishing the Nation of Tomorrow
J.B.MANGHARAM&CO.
GWALIOR — INDIA.

Shortly Arriving in Your Town to Conquer the Hearts of Music Lovers
SOUND TOUCH SATISFACTION MUCH
safari
SOUND RECORDING CASSETTE TAPES
La safari INDUSTRIES

A few of the ads from the Sindhi Halchal Archive. PICS COURTESY: SINDHI HALCHAL ARCHIVE

In the archive, there are ads from as early as 1966 and running into the 2000s. You can spot ads for textiles, electronics, real estate, jewellery and confectionery.

There are also ads for biscuits and toffees, traditional sweets (made of 'pure' ghee) and textiles as well. Some ads signal a sense of nostalgia, with mention of places the business people hailed from pre-Partition. An ad for the "first-ever Sindhi album" with "first-ever Sindhi rap and seven romantic catchy songs" catches attention.

Another ad for "sound recording cassette tapes" is a throwback to the era of mixed tapes. A biscuit ad published in the 70s depicts a child dialling a telephone with a rotary dial. Soni says that two recent exhibitions of the archive held in Bengaluru and Pune earlier this year drew curious visitors, both Sindhi and non-Sindhi.

"A visitor recalled that the Sindhi Board of the Mumbai college he studied in offered him an interest-free loan that helped him study further," says Soni, adding that she's hoping to see the archive spark more such conversations.

EYE ON DESIGN

Where history meets high-rise

An architectural tapestry, Baku weaves medieval fortresses, Soviet monuments, and modern marvels into a bold design narrative, discovers Shoma Abhyankar

The Heydar Aliyev Cultural Centre designed by the renowned architect Zaha Hadid.

Nestled along the shimmering coastline of the Caspian Sea lies Baku, the vibrant capital of Azerbaijan, its ancient counterpart once serving as a vital port along the historic Silk Road. Over centuries, the city has expanded outward from its historical core, now preserved as the Inner City, or 'Icheri Shahar'. An eclectic blend of architectural styles, Baku is a living museum of its layered history. Long before Islamic influence shaped its culture, Azerbaijan was steeped in Zoroastrian traditions. Subsequently, it fell under Russian dominion before emerging as a sovereign republic. The architectural tapestry of Baku thus encompasses an extraordinary array — from medieval Islamic design to opulent European mansions and austere Soviet structures such as the Palace of Soviets, now known as the Government House — culminating in the avant-garde silhouettes of modern edifices.

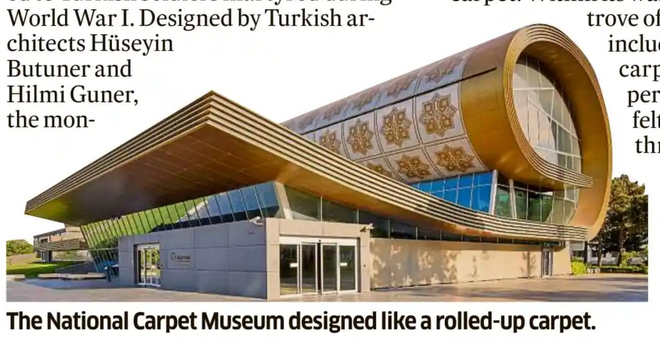
At the heart of the city, the ancient fortified town unfolds in stone-paved alleys and centuries-old monuments. Among its crown jewels stands the 15th-century Palace of the Shirvanshahs, an exquisite embodiment of Islamic architecture featuring intricately carved stone lattices, arched gateways, and a complex housing a mosque, a mausoleum, and a museum. Nearby, the enigmatic Maiden Tower — part of this UNESCO World Heritage site — predates the palace, hinting at a pre-Islamic, Zoroastrian past.

Beyond Icheri Shahar, the modern city unfurls with contemporary commercial buildings sheathed in stone facades, seamlessly merging past with present. Whether one is immersed in the nostalgic charm of the Inner City or navigating the wide boulevards of the contemporary metropolis, the skyline is unmistakably punctuated by one of Baku's most iconic landmarks: the Flame Towers.

Soaring to 190 meters, the trio of Flame Towers dominates the urban landscape, visible from nearly every vantage point. Clad in LED panels that animate the night with vibrant visuals, these towers are symbolic of fire — a motif deeply embedded in Azerbaijan's Zoroastrian heritage — and embody the nation's epithet, the 'Land of Fire'. Housing residential apartments and commercial offices, these flame-shaped structures blaze against the azure sky by day and glow resplendently by night.

For a panoramic view of the city, one must ascend to Highland Park, home to the Shahidlar Monument — a solemn two-storied pyramidal frustum dedicated to Turkish soldiers martyred during World War I. Designed by Turkish architects Hüseyin Butuner and Hilmi Guner, the monument overlooks a breathtaking vista of Baku's glittering skyline stretching along the Caspian shoreline. A stroll along the waterfront promenade, known as the 'Bulvar', reveals an architectural parade of cultural landmarks. Foremost among them is the Azerbaijan Carpet Museum, a striking structure shaped like a half-rolled carpet. Within its walls lies an impressive trove of 14,000 artefacts, including handwoven carpets, traditional copperware, jewellery, and felt items, spread across three meticulously curated floors, preserving the rich legacy of Azerbaijani craftsmanship. Another architectural marvel gracing the coastline is the Crystal Hall, a multifaceted concert and sports venue shaped like a dazzling crystal. Adorned with thousands of LED lights that illuminate its façade by night, the hall has hosted performances by international icons such as Jennifer Lopez, Rihanna, and Shakira, positioning Baku as a global cultural destination.

The historical mosques and the walls of the Shirvanshahs' palace foreground the dramatic Flame Towers in Baku.



The National Carpet Museum designed like a rolled-up carpet.

Fuelled by its flourishing oil economy, Baku has witnessed an architectural renaissance in recent decades. State-of-the-art facilities such as the Baku Aquatic Centre, National Olympic Stadium, National Gymnastics Arena, and the new headquarters of the State Oil Company of the Republic of Azerbaijan exemplify the city's commitment to innovation and infrastructure.

Approximately 20 kilometres northeast of the capital lies the Heydar Aliyev International Airport — the largest in the Caucasus region and acclaimed as one of the world's most aesthetically remarkable airports. Designed in the form of the Azerbaijan Airlines logo, the four-story terminal employs geometric motifs and seismic-responsive materials, reflecting both form and function.

The most iconic modern structure that leaves the visitor awed is, however, the Heydar Aliyev Cultural Centre, designed by renowned architect Zaha Hadid. The white fluid structure curves and rises like a wave above a stepped landscaped terrace. The lit-up, huge glass facades resemble floating sheets of light.

Thus, Baku continues to mark its architectural journey one structure at a time.

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